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Soviet Union

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The United States Government recognizes the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

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Arms Control & Disarmament

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LD0912173991 Moscow TASS in English 1401 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Washington December 9 TASS—Representatives of the U.S. Administration, who wished to remain anonymous, said the United States prefered Soviet nuclear weapons to be moved to the territory of Russia for safekeeping. "U.S. Secretary of State James Baker," they said, "may make this proposal during his forthcoming visits to Russia, Belorussia and Ukraine."

"This decision," they divulged, "was made after two-day debates, during which State Department sovietologists opposed the step, which they regarded as interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. However, Baker and White House staff members arrived at the unanimous conclusion that such a step was necessary in conditions when the Soviet Union was falling apart."

Canada 'Anxious' About Soviet Nuclear Arms

LD1012052991 Moscow TASS in English 2012 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valentin Vasilets]

[Text] Ottawa December 9 TASS—Canada has taken a careful approach to the new commonwealth founded at a summit in Minsk on Sunday by Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia.

Canadian Foreign Ministry spokesman Scott Mallin told a Canadian press correspondent Foreign Ministry was closely watching the encouraging dialogue between the three Slav republics. "We shall see what comes next", Mallin said.

According to Mallin, as a member of NATO, Canada is anxious about the future of nuclear arms on their territory.

United States & Canada

Bush Comments on Developments in Soviet Union

PM1012092991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Dec 91 Union Edition p 7

[IZVESTIYA correspondent A. Blinov report: "Bush's Election Team. New Head of White House Staff Appointed"]

[Excerpts] Washington—"Does the Soviet Union still exist as far as you are concerned? What are your actions in that case"—these questions were put to U.S. President G. Bush at last Thursday's White House press conference.

"Of course the Soviet Union still exists," the U.S. President replied. "At the same time its process of evolution is continuing. We see that the overwhelming majority of people in the Ukraine have voted for independence. Reforms in Russia are forging ahead. In the center there is Gorbachev, committed to reform. We are striving to facilitate this peaceful evolution. I stress peaceful, since there are tremendous problems with arms and the destruction of nuclear weapons, and all that is very, very important."

"We are faced with changes, but no one can predict with certainty what will happen the day after tomorrow," G. Bush said.

Questions about the Soviet Union were put to the head of the U.S. administration, so to speak, "near the end" of his speech to journalists. The main subject of the press conference was the reshuffle in the President's immediate political entourage, the formation of his election team, and assessment of G. Bush's chances of being reelected for a second term.

G. Bush said that Transport Secretary Samuel Skinner has been appointed head of the White House Staff, replacing J. Sununu, who is quitting the post. According to the President, S. Skinner is to play the role of his "firm right hand" in a situation where the "country's economy is creating a difficult challenge." [passage omitted]

Journalists involved in the news conference insistently asked the President for his opinion of the economic situation in the country and the possibilities of his reelection if the current recession drags on.

In G. Bush's opinion, economic growth in the United States "is rather poor at best and there is unemployment" and when "the economic situation deteriorates, the President is comes under fire." However, G. Bush reckons, the recession cannot go on for long.

"Can you hope to be reelected if the economy does not recover?"

"Yes. Because I am a good president."

U.S. 'Satisfied' With Commonwealth Agreement

LD1012110491 Moscow TASS in English 0956 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Barsukov]

[Text] Washington December 10 TASS—The spokeswoman for the U.S. State Department, Margaret Tutwiler, said on Monday the U.S. Administration was inspired and satisfied with the content of the agreement on the commonwealth of independent Slavic states, signed at the weekend by the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine.

Tutwiler emphasised the Soviet Union was going through an incredible and drastic transformation. The fast pace of change is clear. The Soviet citizens, the people themselves should decide whether any kind of central power or a coordinating mechanism, or a community of sovereign independent republics should exist.

The official stressed it was important for the U.S. that transformations on the territory of the former Soviet Union be continued peacefully. She also said the U.S. had not yet recognised the new commowealth of sovereign independent Slavic states.

Answering queries, Tutwiler denied reports that the U.S. Administration wanted the Soviet nuclear arsenal moved to Russia's territory. She said the United States' prime concern was keeping nuclear weapons under reliable control and the fulfillment of the treaty on strategic offensive armaments and the initiatives of Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev.

She said this applied to nuclear armaments both in Russia and in other republics. She said the U.S. did not want to see the number of nuclear states increase.

Discussions With U.S. on Cooperation Continue

LD1012100491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0843 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Andrey Surzhanskiy and Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Moscow, 10 Dec (TASS)—The set of issues connected with the bilateral development of relations between the USSR and the United States is at the center of attention at the Soviet-American consultations continuing here today.

The sides will discuss problems connected with the conditions for stays by employees of the diplomatic and consular missions in the USSR and the United States as well as the issue of "open land"—a concept connected with the abrogation of the practice of having regions that are "closed" to visitors.

Canada Calls Commonwealth 'Positive Step'

LD1012102791 Moscow TASS in English 0920 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valentin Vasilets]

[Text] Ottawa December 10 TASS—The establishment of a commonwealth by three former Soviet republics is a positive step, Barbara McDougall, Canadian secretary of state for external affairs, told reporters.

"We are witnessing republics' attempts to coordinate their approaches to nuclear weapons, the foreign debt, finances, as well as human rights and the rights of minorities. We believe that this is a very positive development," she said.

McDougall refrained from an explicit estimates as to whether the Soviet Union still exists. "It is clear that fundamental changes are taking place and that they will continue there for a certain period of time," she said.

This is yet another step in the evolution of republics. Unbelievably much has changed in the Soviet Union without violence, the minister added.

According to McDougall, Canada was not asked to recognise the new commonwealth and it has no immediate plans to do that.

The Canadian foreign minister said that official representatives of the Canadian Government would meet in Kiev with President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine on Tuesday [10 December]. "We hope to cooperate with republics," she said.

MFN Status More Symbolic Than Practical

PM0912122791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Dec 91 p 4

[Vladislav Drobkov report under the "Correspondent Comments" rubric: "Another Iceberg Melts"]

[Text] Washington, 4 Dec—The overall warming in the climate of U.S.-Soviet relations was confirmed recently by a significant event—Congress approved a Soviet-U.S. trade agreement granting the USSR most-favored-nation status in trade. So one of the last "icebergs" remaining from "cold war" times melted. The Soviet Union was deprived of that status 40 years ago.

Most-favored-nation status envisages reducing current customs tariffs retarding the development of mutually advantageous trade between our two countries. This was envisaged by the trade agreement signed by the USSR and U.S. Presidents back in June 1990. However, for more than a year this agreement was unable to win the approval of the U.S. Congress. President G. Bush did not send it to Capitol Hill for a long time, waiting for the USSR to adopt a new law on emigration. Incidentally, our Supreme Soviet ceased to exist without ever ratifying this document.

So for the time being the restoration of our country's worthy status will be symbolic rather than practical. In the opinion of some experts here, it will most rapidly affect Soviet vodka exports to the United States. Our other commodities, apart from raw materials and energy sources, regrettably have great difficulty in getting onto the market here. It is not so much customs tariffs as the drastic shortage of convertible currency in the USSR that is preventing major purchases of U.S. output. The credits that we were recently given are mainly being used to procure grain.

However, be that as it may, the U.S. Congress' action was bound to elicit entirely justified satisfaction in everyone who favors the development of good relations between our states. First, the very fact that the 40-year restrictions have been lifted is highly indicative. Second, it marks the end of discriminatory practices in Soviet-U.S. economic relations. Third, Congress has acted, in my view, constructively and pragmatically in refusing to tie the restoration of the USSR's most-favored-nation status with any political demands, as urged by some congressmen.

The only possible cause for regret is that it has taken so long to restore normal U.S.-USSR trading relations. This caused us unwarranted difficulties and financial losses and, as far as the United States is concerned, it made it difficult for U.S. companies to gain access to the promising Soviet market. Of course, this market by no means guarantees rapid, steady dividends at present, given the utter crisis in our economy. However, serious businessmen cannot fail to plan their actions many years ahead. U.S. firms' current poor positions in our country—particularly given U.S. potential—are the side effect of U.S. discriminatory policy toward the USSR.

To continue the comparison of the restrictions remaining from the "cold war" period with an "iceberg," I can say that its disappearance from our relations will open up an easier and safer trade route between America and Russia. Let us hope that traffic along this route will be more frequent and busier.

China

New Chinese Ambassador Received by Rogachev

LD0612233291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1420 GMT 6 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Vasiliy Titov]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Dec (TASS)—The development of good-neighborly relations between the USSR and the People's Republic of China is needed not only for the peoples of the two countries but, as a very important factor of stability, for the world as a whole. This is what Wang Jinqing, the new Chinese ambassador to the USSR, thinks. A meeting between him and Igor Rogachev, USSR deputy minister for external relations, took place today in connection with his coming presentation of credentials.

The Chinese ambassador noted in an interview given to a TASS correspondent after the meeting that contacts between the two countries have been successful of late. He considers that such tendencies have to be strengthened and developed. As for the increased activities of the current sovereign union republics in the foreign affairs arena, Wang Jinqing says, China respects the choice of the peoples of these republics and has the intention of developing relations with all of them without exception.

The new Chinese ambassador is 62 years old. He previously worked in Moscow during the periods 1954-1956 and 1970-1977. The PRC Government's choice, according to Igor Rogachev, has been positively received in the Soviet Union. Wang Jinqing is known as a prominent specialist in Soviet affairs. He is well acquainted with the country where he will be staying and with its culture and traditions, the deputy minister noted. I hope that our cooperation will be useful and fruitful, he added.

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Rogachev Receives Cambodian Ambassador

BK0812045691 Moscow Radio Moscow in Cambodian 1100 GMT 7 Dec 91

[Text] The Press Department of the Foreign Ministry of the Soviet Union disclosed that yesterday, 6 December, Igor Rogachev, Soviet deputy foreign minister, received for talks Mrs. Bo Rasi, Cambodian ambassador to the Soviet Union, at the latter's request.

The two sides exchanged views on the evolution of the Cambodian solution process. They also discussed bilateral relations.

Moscow To Receive Aid From Vietnam

PM0912112991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Dec 91 Union Edition p 6

[B. Vinogradov report: "Help Going in Opposite Direction: Hanoi's Gift to Impoverished Moscow"]

[Text] Residents of Hanoi have expressed a selfless readiness to give humanitarian aid and send impoverished Moscow donations in the form of commodities, consumer goods, and food worth in total around $360,000.

This decision has been made by the capital's People's Committee and is announced in a special message to the leadership of Moscow City Hall. This is the first occasion in the entire history of Soviet-Vietnamese relations that free aid has traveled in the opposite direction—from the transfusion recipient to the exhausted donor. Just a year or two ago it would have been difficult to imagine anything like this.

It goes without saying that Vietnam—which is still quite a poor and backward country—does not have surplus stocks of food or commodities. Everything is rationed and calculated to the limit. The Vietnamese themselves, who have known hard times—which are still in evidence to this day—seem to be showing that they well remember the true value of the timely aid from the once great Land of the Soviets, which now finds itself in the position of the taker rather than the giver.

Whether from a sense of solidarity with starving Muscovites or a feeling of embarrassment at the sight of the changed situation, the local press is not going to town over Hanoi's charitable gesture. But we would like the residents of Moscow to know who is extending a hand to them.

Under an agreement with the Russian Government, we were told at the Soviet embassy, transport aircraft will be sent to bring the freight back. It is expected that in the next few days a list of goods will be agreed and the first consignments will reach Moscow this month. For its part, Ho Chi Minh City, another major Vietnamese city, is preparing to follow Hanoi's example and send similar gifts to its sister city—St. Petersburg.

SRV Denies KGB Questioned U.S. POWs

LD1012102891 Moscow TASS in English 0845 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Denisovich]

[Text] Hanoi December 10 TASS—All U.S. prisoners of war were returned home after Vietnam signed the Paris Agreement in 1973 and no interrogations of American POWs by the KGB or any other intelligence were possible, the NHAN DAN newspaper reported today quoting a Vietnamese organisation responsible for the search of those listed as missing in action.

THE INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE said a former KGB officer, speaking on Australian TV, claimed he was heading an intelligence group in Vietnam which in 1975-1978 interrogated American POWs.

The Vietnamese organisation denounced the allegations which are "misleading the public opinion," it said.

Near East & South Asia

Shaposhnikov Meets Afghan Vice President

LD0712102591 Moscow TASS in English 1013 GMT 6 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovskiy]

[Text] Moscow December 6 TASS—Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov and visiting Afghan Vice President Mohammad Rafi' agreed at a meeting today that the Afghan crisis can be solved only by peaceful means and negotiations. There is no military solution to the conflict, they affirmed.

Mohammad Rafi' said the government would do everything possible to free Soviet prisoners of war held by the mujahidins.

Shaposhnikov and Rafi' agreed that friendly relations between the two neighbouring countries should develop on a mutually advantageous basis.

Afghanistan's Political Situation Analyzed

OW0712045691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1704 GMT 6 Dec 91

[From the "Nation & Society" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Afghanistan's political situation is analyzed by Soviet politologist [as received] Valeriy Sidorov.

The recent Moscow talks between Soviet diplomats and Afghan opposition leaders have been widely commented on by the Soviet and world press. Many observers give very high grades to the results of the talks and view them as a key to sharp positive shifts in Afghanistan. There are, however, very weighty grounds to take such estimates with a grain of salt.

It is quite probable that the opposition leaders who came to Moscow will take actual efforts to ensure the release of a number of Soviet POW's. But how many? It is claimed that 300 Soviet soldiers are kept as prisoners or are listed as missing in action. This figure is incongruous. It includes around 40 soldiers who are actual POW's who are forcibly held by mujahidin and in Pakistani prisons. About 30 to 40 of the Soviets are no longer POW's, they have assimilated in Afghanistan, embraced Islam, changed their names, got families—in short, they are anything but POW's. A small number of the Soviets continue fighting, but now against the government's troops or their competitors among the rebels or even as members of commonplace criminal gangs of which Afghanistan has many. And the bulk of the presumed POW's are actually dead, but how they died and where they were buried the Soviet Union does not know.

So the Moscow Accords actually cover only the first category of the POW's, but the "Moscow mujahidin delegation" cannot do much to help release them either. Many of the POW's are held by the troops of Hekmatyar and other "intransigent" rebels who refused to send their representatives to Moscow. But even more are being held by military units on the Afghan territory, and the field commanders' accountability to the "interim Islamic government" is quite flexible. Even the "pillars of the opposition" such as, for example, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud who is regarded as the mainstay of Rambani's [as received] party, are not rushing to support the Moscow agreement, and not only because there is intense strife between the leaders and units of the Peshawar "seven" and of the Iranian "nine." Most field commanders have realized that the Soviet POW's are a bargaining chip that can be used to get hard currency, trucks, tractors, uniforms, wheat and medicine.

There are no grounds to believe that the situation is going to change. The Soviet Union has no alternative to accepting the mujahidin's conditions and to bargaining with the field commanders for the Soviet POW's. Ironically, Soviet interests would be better served by turning to the Afghan National Security Ministry and the parliamentary National Mediating Commission under Senator K. Iskakhzay [as received]. They stay in touch with nearly all armed formations on Afghan territory, and the business circles help a lot in the mediating efforts. I believe that active efforts in this direction are more promising than any pledges of the opposition leaders. To be sure, if they keep their word and release at least several Soviet POW's, this will certainly be a good thing.

Now to part two of the agreement that provides for the transfer of power to an interim Islamic government. It would be fine to know exactly how the negotiators are going to see this clause implemented. In my opinion, this measure cannot have any realistic influence on the balance of forces in Afghanistan, because following the Soviet pullout the very same "interim Islamic government" has been bending every effort to capture power but to no avail. How many Cassandras have there been who have predicted the downfall of Najibollah's regime within two to three weeks? But what are these predictions worth? The opposition cannot boast any major success, while the governmental troops keep their capability for vigorous actions.

It has turned out that Najibollah has a wide social and political base. He has advanced a national reconciliation programme; in fact, he makes consistent progress on its implementation. Thus, the National Democratic Party of Afghanistan has become the Motherhood party, and its programme has been shorn of all "Sovietized" concepts. Eleven political parties have been legalized, and the opposition can publish newspapers in Kabul. It is a policy to encourage business, and this policy is being enshrined in law. Najibollah seeks compromise with leaders of individual opposition groupings and he is even ready to relinquish control of whole provinces if the opposition can bring life there back to normal.

A well-organized and influential force, Afghan business people prefer Najibullah to the opposition because they realize that the advent of the nine or the seven would inevitably Lebanonize the nation.

It should be noted that democracy, Afghan style, is markedly different from what is described as democracy in Western countries. No matter what promises the opposition leaders made in Moscow concerning the conduct of a general democratic election, they are nothing but bluff, I believe. Every person who knows the ways of the tribal Afghan society is aware of the absurdity of viewing Afghanistan in terms of Western democracy. The closest to the Western democratic institutions is the Loya Jerga, i.e., a gathering of tribal representatives that has been taking nationwide decisions in the country from times immemorial. By the way, Najibollah was elected by the body.

The Geneva Accords governing the settlement of the Afghan problem provide for the establishment of an interim coalition government. This reflects the understanding that the opposition, as well as Najibollah's government, are two leading forces that cannot be ignored. I wonder how the Russian diplomats managed to substitute the term "interim government" for a "coalition government." Do they understand how this can change the geopolitical future of both Central Asia and the whole world?

I am fresh from Kabul where I met with UN experts. They are quite alarmed by the general developments in the region and directly accuse the USSR and the Western democratic leaders of failure to grasp the meaning of the ongoing processes. According to them, Mikhail Gorbachev and George Bush ought to have suggested an international meeting on Afghanistan, following a situational analysis of the strategic development of the situation. The problem is not what is in store for Najibullah; the problem is which road Afghanistan will take.

Having developed a fixation on the condemnation of Najibollah's "puppet" regime, our and Western democrats do not wish to realize that the problem is not reducible to a standoff between Najibollah and the opposition. The crux of the matter is whether Afghanistan can become a lay Islamic state on the model of Egypt or Turkey, or yet another link in the chain of Islamic fundamentalism.

The situation in Central Asia has been developing in such a way that the USSR and the USA have been losing influence in the region to Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan has an eye on Uzbekistan, and Iran, on Tajikistan. And the cherished dream of the Islamic fundamentalists is Kazakhstan, which would give them a nuclear capability. The potential of such an alliance would be a disaster for East-West relations.

I would not claim that this scenario is a foregone conclusion, but it is doubtless quite realistic. Our politicians must calculate its consequences. The Moscow talks on Afghanistan, regrettably, are not particularly inspiring in this respect.

Moscow Forms Iraqi People's Defense Committee

PM0912105391 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 5 Dec 91 p 5

[P. Sidorov report: "We Must Not Stay Quiet and Idle"]

[Text] The economic blockade of Iraq has lasted more than a year. For the first time in history the world community is committing genocide against an entire people in the name of "humanism and panhuman values." Old people and pregnant women are dying, left without medicines, and the shortage of milk and baby food has brought 170,000 children to the point of death...

This was said at a session of the Soviet Committee for the Defense of the Iraqi People, held in Moscow. A plan of the committee's activity was drawn up, and an appeal was adopted which states, in particular: "Politicians cynically argue about world harmony and mutual understanding while at the same time the genetic stock of a people who created one of the most ancient civilizations is being undermined. It is criminal to continue to stay quiet and idle."

CW Destruction Plant Sale to Iraq Proposed

92UF0276A Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 22 Nov 91 Union Edition p 6

[Article by Doctor of Chemical Sciences S. Yufit of the Social and Ecological Union: "We Have Such a Plant, And It Should Be Sold to Iraq"]

[Text] I would like to call your attention to a problem whose solution could be a first step in the establishment of good-neighbor relations between Iraq and Israel, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

In his recent interview with an IZVESTIYA correspondent, Colonel General S.V. Petrov, chief of chemical forces, said that we do not have a single plant for the destruction of chemical weapons. This is not entirely accurate. There is one such plant, but it is as though it does not exist. The puzzle is easily solved—a new, first-class plant has been built in the city of Chapayevsk, but it has not destroyed a single gram of chemical agents since the community of Chapayevsk has prevented its inauguration, despite the academic expert appraisal and assurances as to its complete ecological safety, which undoubtedly corresponded to reality. We can understand the population of Chapayevsk: The situation is difficult there, and one more chemical plant around its neck is too much. But what, after all, is to be done with the plant? As distinct from the plundered "Krug," General Petrov's department did not allow the plant to be atomized but created there some training-practice center. As a result the plant in Chapayevsk is fit for operation at any moment, but it will never operate in our country, alas. It obviously needs to be sold. Who might buy it? A unique international and domestic political situation has been created at this time. If we can take advantage of it, the country could obtain $100 million in a very short space of time.

Here is the nub of the matter. As a result of having lost the war in the Gulf, Iraq is required to destroy all the weapons of mass destruction it possesses. These are nuclear weapons and biological and chemical weapons. With the first two, things are more or less clear. In order to destroy them it is necessary to dismantle the nuclear installations and burn the biological facilities. But what is to be done with the chemical weapons, of which Iraq has "proven" to have, according to some figures, approximately 20,000 tons? Chemical weapons cannot be dismantled like a nuclear warhead, they cannot be incinerated like bio-cultures. And our chief chemical general is right—special plants, time, and a large amount of money are needed for the destruction of chemical weapons. As a result Iraq has found itself driven into a corner: The chemical weapons and war gas have to be destroyed, but technically it is unable to do this.

There are in the world only two proven techniques of the destruction of chemical weapons—ours and the Americans'. The American plant is dearer than ours by an order of magnitude and requires a high technological level, of which it is hard to conceive in a war-ravaged country. There remains ours—the ready-made new plant in Chapayevsk. It is in Iraq's interests to purchase this plant, having requested UN Security Council permission to sell the corresponding quantity of oil to pay for the contract (the figure of $100 million to pay for the whole contract is mine—it is the result of estimates, in accordance with available data, and adjustments for current prices. It could be somewhat lower, but, what is more likely, appreciably higher also). Interested countries—Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran—could grant credit for the purchase of the plant and possibly the construction of one or two more to speed up the conclusive destruction of all chemical weapons. Such credit would be an important step en route to the establishment of good- neighbor relations between Iraq and these countries. The question of the sale of the plant to Iraq requires a decision at the international level.

Such a decision would be beneficial to everyone. But "someone" has to make it.

Commentary Views U.S.-Iranian Rapprochement

NC0412214391 Moscow Radio Moscow in Persian to Iran 1430 GMT 2 Dec 91

[Yuriy Andreyev commentary from the "World Today" program]

[Text] Esteemed listeners. U.S. State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher announced at a White House press conference that the United States will reimburse Iran $278 million for military equipment not delivered by Washington in the aftermath of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, because the United States did not honor its commitment.

The International Court of Justice [ICJ] has been assessing the claims of the United States and Iran behind closed doors for 10 years now. The court was set up in 1981 when bilateral talks were deadlocked. Iran demanded that the United States return $11 billion which the former Shah paid to the United States for arms and material. These armaments, however, were never delivered to Iran due to the 1981 international arms embargo to Iran and Iraq.

The United States, at the same time, filed a petition against Iran for compensation on losses suffered by U.S. companies during the Islamic Revolution in Iran. The ICJ has virtually hundreds of dossiers on such petitions filed against Iran. The total of these claims against Iran exceeds $4 billion. Investigations in the Hague will eventually bear fruit. For example, last year with the ICJ's mediation, the United States and Iran signed an agreement on a number of minor petitions, totaling some $250,000. After 18 months of difficult negotiations, however, Tehran and Washington agreed on a larger sum.

The United States agreed that as payment of its backlog of payments for undelivered military equipment the sum of $260 million should be directly paid to the Iranian Government. The remaining $18 million will be deposited in a special fund. The ICJ will compensate American companies who sustained losses as a result of the breach of contracts following the Islamic Revolution from the account.

The two sides insist that the resolving of fiscal issues does not imply that political differences will also be resolved. Political observers, however, believe that the possibility does in fact exist. For example, it appears that the agreement was signed after the unconditional release of two American hostages in Lebanon. Another hostage is expected to be released soon. It is not too farfetched to believe that a special exchange may take place between Iran and the United States of money for individuals, even though the two sides deny this.

It is difficult to make any conjectures about the hidden provisos of the agreement, a transaction or a sign of gradual improvement of relations between Iran and the United States.

East Europe

Shevardnadze Warns of Chaos, Civil War

LD1012105991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0721 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Malyshev]

[Text] Athens, 10 Dec (TASS)—Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR minister of external relations, has spoken about the possibility of chaos and civil war in the country in an interview with the Greek newspaper NEA. The most terrible thing, he said, would be to find ourselves in a state of chaos, and economic and political anarchy. There is still a chance of saving the country and improving the economy, but this requires immense effort.

The country, the minister noted, has rich resources and great intellectual potential. A very great deal could be achieved in a short time. I still want to believe that we will be able to overcome the very worst. If the destructive processes develop it will cause chaos throughout the world, not only in Europe. If we end up in chaos, then clashes are possible, a civil war is possible, into which not only the republics of the Union but also neighboring states could be drawn.

Shevardnadze stressed that next year, particularly the first six months, will be very difficult for the people. A phase will then begin leading to an improvement. However, this will only happen if the Union or a community in the full sense of the word is preserved. If not, it is difficult to say what the consequences will be, he warned.

Position on SFRY 'Difficult To Define'

OW0612225391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 17370 GMT 6 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The impression from talks with Soviet diplomats is that Moscow finds it difficult to define its position towards the latest events in Yugoslavia. On the one hand, the USSR can't ignore the world public opinion and the recent decision by the EC countries to call off sanctions against all Yugoslavia's republics save Serbia and Montenegro. On the other hand, solidarity with that position would demand a decision on recognizing Slovenia and Croatia.

The matter is further complicated by the fact that the Union structures responsible for foreign policies face a similar situation within the country. After the referendum in the Ukraine Moscow reacts disapprovingly to other countries recognizing the independence of that republic.

Croatia, Slovenia Recognition Viewed as 'Rash'

LD0612215591 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1809 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, Dec 6 (TANJUG)—The Soviet Union shares the view of the United States that the readiness of some countries to recognize the Yugoslav breakaway Republics of Croatia and Slovenia at an early date is rash and may do more harm than good, TANJUG learnt at the Soviet Foreign Ministry today.

The Soviet Union believes that it is necessary to exercise the "utmost restraint and take a constructive approach" in dealing with this question, TANJUG's correspondent in Moscow was told.

It is the view taken by the Soviet Foreign Ministry that a hasty recognition of the two republics which have unilaterally seceded from Yugoslavia will not help find a solution to the Yugoslav crisis, but will only further complicate matters.

Ministry 'Ready' To Send Group to SFRY

LD0812065991 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2159 GMT 5 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] According to the information from reliable sources, the USSR Defence Ministry stands ready to send military observers or a military group to Yugoslavia with peace-making mission, subject to the USSR Supreme Soviet's authorization.

According to the officials from the USSR Defence Ministry, the dispatch of observers or a military group to Yugoslavia is feasible, in case a peace-making activity is started in the country under the UN's auspices, and with consent of the belligerents. The Soviet side could dispatch, in keeping with the norms, established in the UN, a mechanized infantry battalion or a support unit—engineering, medical, transport, communications, etc. The decision on dispatching a Soviet military group abroad can be taken exclusively by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

According to the information from reliable sources, the USSR Defence Ministry stands ready to submit appropriate proposals to the USSR Supreme Soviet. At present approximately 90 Soviet officers are servicing under the auspices of the UN peace-making operations in different regions. In particular, 35 persons (17 in Damascus, 14 in Cairo and 2 in Jerusalem) pass their service within the

UN body to monitor the truce agreement in Palestine. This April 20 Soviet military observers were sent to serve within the Unikom [as received] at Kuwait-Iraqi border. Another 29 Soviet officers have been participating in the UN's operations in Western Sahara, since this September. At present 3 Soviet officers are ready to be sent to Cambodia within a UN pilot mission.

Gorbachev on 1956 Hungarian 'Interference'

LD0612221191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 6 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] Talks between USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall were held today in St. Catherine's Hall in the Kremlin. An examination was made of bilateral relations and it was noted that they have now entered a qualitatively new phase. Discussing the processes now taking place in our countries, Gorbachev and Antall spoke frankly about the not inconsiderable number of difficulties along the path of reforms. Then Mikhail Gorbachev and Jozsef Antall signed a treaty on the fundamentals of goodneighborliness and cooperation between the USSR and Hungary.

[Begin Gorbachev recording] I want to take this opportunity to say in the presence of this high-ranking Hungarian delegation that we cannot and indeed are not entitled on this day to fail to tell you ... to give you our view of the events of 1956; to tell you that interference in Hungary's internal affairs was committed on the part of the Soviet Union. What we and you have done in recent times draws a line under the past, and I hope that we and you have now opened up the first page in the book of good relations between countries and peoples which have lived together and will live and cooperate fruitfully for long to come. [end recording]

Hungary's Antall Interviewed on Union Ties

PM0912153991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Dec 91 Union Edition pp 1,2

[Interview with Hungarian Prime Minister J. Antall by correspondent F. Lukyanov: "Jozsef Antall: We are Extending the Hand of Friendship to the Soviet Union"]

[Text] Budapest—Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall has arrived in Moscow at the invitation of USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev. In the morning the prime minister met with M. Gorbachev, after which the sides signed a treaty on the principles of good-neighborliness and cooperation between the USSR and Hungary. Jozsef Antall will also be meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and then he flies to Kiev for talks with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk. Russian-Hungarian and Ukrainian-Hungarian documents are to be signed.

Before leaving for Moscow J. Antall received IZVESTIYA correspondent F. Lukyanov and answered his questions.

[Lukyanov] Mr. Prime Minister, given the present situation, how do you see the signing of a Soviet-Hungarian treaty, after all, there were calls in Hungary for you not to go to Moscow at the moment, to wait a while... How would you describe the changes that have taken place in Budapest's relations with Moscow and with the Soviet republics in recent years?

[Antall] My opinion—and I think it is shared by the Hungarian parliament—is that all the peoples of the former Union's republics, irrespective of what form of government or management they choose for themselves, have been and remain our neighbors and partners and as such will continue to play a significant part in Hungary's foreign policy and in its economy. In the past 18 months my government has always sought to conclude a new interstate treaty with the Soviet Government and also to bring relations with our main trade and economic partners in the USSR—Russia and the Ukraine—in line with the new realities.

How the situation develops now with regard to the reform of the Union following the Ukrainian referendum and the Ukraine's proclamation of independence and what relations it is going to have with Russia is not up to us and we should not interfere. The Ukraine is of great importance to Hungary. First, because it is our closest neighbor, and all paths to the other USSR republics go through the Ukraine. In our view, it is perfectly logical on this basis that Hungary should be one of the first to recognize Ukrainian independence and establish diplomatic relations with it.

It must also be borne in mind that Transcarpathia, where 200,000 ethnic Hungarians live, whose future, of course, is by no means a matter of indifference to us, has been part of the Ukraine since the end of World War II. Naturally, we would like their rights, the rights of an ethnic minority, to be ensured at the proper level, just as Russia, obviously, wants the Russian population in other states and republics of the former USSR to be protected and its rights ensured.

I repeat: All the roads come to us via the Ukraine, including oil pipelines and gas pipelines, but they come from Russia. Russia is the most important trade and economic partner for us, of course.

[Lukyanov] How do you assess the new treaty with Moscow and what does it do for the development of good-neighborliness and cooperation?

[Antall] The fact that in the past 18 months, that is, during my government's period of office, there have been tense moments in Hungarian-Soviet relations, is not because the Hungarian Government was deliberately trying to complicate relations with Moscow. Rather, they arose because Hungary had decided for itself that it must leave the Warsaw Pact, that CEMA, which, in our opinion, had become a drag on trade and economic relations, had to be abolished, and also because our government, like the previous socialist government, insisted on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungarian territory. Neither were we inclined to sign the new Soviet-Hungarian interstate treaty incorporating an article that definitely restricted our sovereignty, by placing obstacles in the way of Hungary's entry into the EEC, for example.

I believe that today, following all the changes in our relations, which have in fact become equal relations, we can extend a hand of friendship to President Gorbachev and President Yeltsin, to President Kravchuk, to the peoples of Russia, the Ukraine, and the other republics. And that is what we are doing, extending the hand of friendship.

The fact that we failed to elaborate a new interstate treaty before was clearly also due to the uncertain international situation, indeed the correlation of forces was not entirely clear in the Soviet Union itself. For instance, the Ukraine, in the shape of its foreign minister, gave to understand in Budapest last summer that it wanted to be independent, but we decided at the time that we should not interfere in the processes taking place in the USSR and must wait for the peoples to decide themselves.

As regards Hungary's new treaty with the USSR and also the treaties with Russia and the Ukraine, it has to be said that they are documents on general principles of relations, which, obviously, will be followed by other, more detailed agreements. In the treaty with the present Union of Sovereign States, we establish a new type of relations and stipulate that as future changes take place in the USSR's state system these changes will be automatically reflected in the interstate treaty and it will not be necessary to reword all the articles each time. In our view, it is very important that all three documents are being signed simultaneously. Naturally, in the future we will be prepared to sign similar documents with other republics or states of the former Union.

The economic problems between our countries are pretty serious at the moment. The Soviet debt to Hungary is only part of the problem. We are very worried, as is Moscow too, by the veritable collapse of trade that has taken place since the switch to dollar transactions. Trade turnover fell during the year by nearly 60 percent! I think the switch to dollar transactions was warranted, but since both sides have very limited supplies of cash, then, obviously, the time has come to make adjustments. Possibly, at first, by expanding barter trade. A switch to paper transactions is not ruled out. I will be talking about all this with President Gorbachev and with President Yeltsin, and about the problems of the real estate left behind by Soviet forces in Hungary. It is absolutely clear that in the future trade and economic relations between our countries are more likely to develop at the level of republics and actual producers and enterprises.

In view of the current difficulties in your country, in Russia, we are expressing our willingness to give what help we can, but we can only do so much, because the economic situation in Hungary is not brilliant at the moment. It would be very stupid for us to underestimate the vast potential of the Union and Russian markets. In time your economic situation will return to normal, I am sure, and, I repeat, we are prepared to help this along through our own experience and possible food supplies, as it is planned to do within the framework of EEC aid.

From the bottom of my heart I hope the peoples of the Soviet Union get through the difficult winter ahead and I hope they do not fall under the influence of various demagogues, which, in my view, is a common problem for all the countries of Eastern Europe at the moment. The main thing is to avoid anarchy, which always gives rise to dictatorship.

[Lukyanov] Many politicians believe that there is now a security vacuum in Eastern Europe, following the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact. Increasingly one hears talk of a possible revision of state borders, which undermines the foundations of the Helsinki accords, and the threat of the spread of nuclear weapons is emerging. In your view, what is the way out of this threatening situation for the countries of the region?

[Antall] One can hardly agree that the security system that existed in Eastern Europe in recent decades meant reliable security for these countries. Remember 1956 and 1968, for example. It is clear also that a new international security system could not appear immediately in the region following the disintegration of the Eastern bloc and the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact and CEMA. It is sad that the international community did not take the requisite preventive measures. The West spent 74 years waiting for the collapse of communism, but when it occurred it was totally unprepared.

Now it is perfectly obvious that the way out of the present situation, in the military-political and trade-economic respects, is to be sought within the framework of the all-European process. Expanding the all-European security system, of which NATO and the U.S. military presence in Europe, establishing an equilibrium, are the stable guarantee, is the only way to prevent the region from sinking into further conflicts.

The question of state borders has indeed been raised and may well reappear continually on the agenda. But it is very important to stress that this question can only be discussed within the framework of an all-European negotiating process.

If, say, one country presents its claims to another country for a change in the state borders and, in addition, takes some kind of violent action, as is happening in Yugoslavia at the moment, then this is bound to lead to conflicts and an escalation of conflicts in accordance with the domino principle. But if it all takes place by nonviolent means, if dedication and loyalty to the Helsinki agreements are confirmed, then one can even imagine negotiations about borders. But in view of the present situation in Europe, where many state borders changed after the wars this century, if any country were to place the question of revising borders on the agenda it would have undesirable consequences for general security. The rights of various ethnic minorities can also be safeguarded by other means—the creation of autonomous entities, unions of some kind, so that the ethnic minorities feel OK within the framework of the state where they are currently living. In short, when solving any problems, be they political problems, security problems, or economic problems, they must be tackled within the frameworpk of talks and considerationm of mutual interests.

Commentary Views Hungarian Minister's Visit

LD0712131991 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 5 Dec 91

[Yevgeniy Krishkin commentary]

[Text] A visit by Hungarian Prime Minister Jozsef Antall to Moscow is an important event in Soviet-Hungarian relations. A view from Yevgeniy Krishkin:

The search for an updated relationship between the Soviet Union and the members of the defunct Warsaw Pact and Comecon is coming to the foreground in international life. Hungary as well as several other nations in the formerly communist-oriented Eastern Europe have reviewed their priorities.

In the past few years their new leaders were looking for guidance from the West, say from the European Community, and bothered little about advanced cooperation with the East. Although this approach seems unnatural, opinions may differ on how well it served the national interest.

It had taken a long time to advance Soviet-Hungarian cooperation, and sooner or later the Hungarian leaders had to see the need for new efforts in this field. The Soviet and Hungarian economies are bound up with each other. The Hungarian economy cannot function well without Soviet oil, gas, power, metal and other deliveries and without the Soviet market, for, due to a number of reasons, Hungary finds it difficult to sell its production in the West.

The Soviet republics have proclaimed independence from the Union. The agenda for Prime Minister Antall's visit shows Hungary has taken this into account and is seeking a [word indistinct] relationship with the Soviet Union as a whole and its individual republics. The Hungarian premier will hold talks with national President Gorbachev and Presidents Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation and Leonid Kravchuk of the Ukraine.

With a view to promote contacts with both the central administration and individual republics, he's going to launch diplomatic relations with Russia. He can hardly be expected to encounter problems. Soviet troops have already been withdrawn from his country and, given goodwill, the two countries will, of course, find it possible to settle the remaining property problems. But the discussions Jozsef Antall is going to hold in Moscow and Kiev will obviously encompass a wider range of issues. Now that a crisis has broken out in neighboring Yugoslavia, Hungary and other nations of Eastern Europe are justly concerned about the turbulent developments inside the Soviet Union.

West Europe

French Warning Against Soviet Anarchy Noted

LD0912235991 Moscow TASS in English 2225 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Shvets]

[Text] Paris December 9 TASS—France hopes the USSR "death certificate" signed in Minsk does not bring anarchy to the development of events in the region and provoke a situation similar to that in Yugoslavia, French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas told the Europe'1 radio station today.

It is desirable that the reorganization of the Soviet Union include "political center of gravity", which should, undoubtedly, differ from what they had before. The establishment of at least minimum order in this respect would harm no one, including the West.

"At the same time as they are signing the death certificate of the old union, they are signing the birth certificate of something new", Dumas said. In his opinion, the meeting in Belorussia was inspired by the idea of the creating of "a new center".

Discussions of this issue are underway in Moscow, and it is still early to speak about their results, Roland Dumas noted.

Speaking of the fate of the Soviet nuclear arsenal, Dumas said "Gorbachev still has the code to the atomic weapons in his pocket." However, the nuclear weapons are stationed in four republics.

With this in mind, French President Francois Mitterrand's recent suggestion to hold a meeting uniting the four powers with nuclear weapons in Europe has never been more topical, Dumas said.

Lobov Satisfied With Results of UK Visit

LD0712101191 Moscow TASS in English 1120 GMT 6 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Sidorov]

[Text] London December 6 TASS—"I am fully satisfied with the results of the talks I had with Field Marshal Richard Vincent, chief of staff of the British Defence, his Deputy Michael Quinlan and other British military leaders," Chief of Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces General Vladimir Lobov told TASS.

"We had a frank dialogue," he said, "which dealt with Soviet- British relations, future contacts between the Armed Forces and staffs of the two countries, and the situation in the Soviet Union and its republics."

According to Lobov, the talks focused, naturally, on problems of disarmament—reduction of strategic offensive armaments and the Vienna talks. "I believe our future relations will develop successfully," Lobov noted.

Turning to the situation in the Soviet Union, Lobov said that "discipline has improved in the Army after the so-called August events and combat training problems are being tackled more efficiently. This shows that the Army is approaching with a sense of heightened responsibility the duties it is discharging in the interests of the state and the republics."

During the visit, which began on December 1, Lobov attended exercises of the British ground forces in Cambridgeshire, visited a nuclear submarines base in Faslane, northern Scotland, an Air Force base in Honnington, Suffolk County, and a pilots' training centre, using "Tornado" warplanes.

The results of the visit were highly assessed by editor-in-chief of the magazine "JANE'S INTELLIGENCE REVIEW" Henry Dodds. He told TASS that Lobov's views were very progressive and his reasonable concept of ensuring the Soviet Union's security was noteworthy. The concept envisages the independent development of the republics.

According to Dodds, recognizing the inevitability of this process, Lobov suggests a security system, which will not only safeguard the Soviet Union from hostile attacks from the outside, but will prevent the country from any participation in the arms race. Dodds believes this defence concept is based on the principle of reasonable arms sufficency.

Paper 'Misleading' Readers on Platinum Deals

PM0912163391 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Dec 91 First Edition p 8

[Aleksandr Orlov report under "Feedback" rubric: "The Precious Metal Has Not Gone, Anyway"]

[Text] Reports have been published in a number of foreign publications, in particular Britain's DAILY TELEGRAPH, that our state has transferred its platinum reserves into Swiss banks, and this has provoked a pretty strong public reaction.

We have managed to discover in the country's State Depository of Valuables that our British colleagues have been misleading their readers. The state platinum reserves are still in our country. And the question, apparently, should be a different one. Both in previous years and today, the country has been selling certain consignments of platinum and gold. It seems that it was the appearance of one of these consignments in foreign banks which attracted the attention of journalists.

Incidentally, it should be noted that the sale of gold and platinum does not always have a final character, so to speak. There exists an international practice of regular sales and purchases of precious metals with the aim of making profits on price differences.

In our country the Bank for Foreign Economic Activity and the "Almazyuvelireksport" association possess the right to sell precious metals. The confusion that occurred over the Soviet platinum can be partly explained also by the fact that Soviet exporters of precious commodities operate with considerable autonomy (on the basis of government commissions) and by no means always keep the curators of the valuables informed as to where the gold and platinum in their charge is going. Let us hope that the Committee for Precious Metals and Precious Stones, set up by decree of the RSFSR president, will exclude all misunderstandings in this sensitive sphere.

Search for New Wallenberg Documents Continues

LD0812024991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0038 GMT 6 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Dmitriy Gorokhov]

[Text] Stockholm, 6 Dec (TASS)—Can the archives that were still top secret until quite recently throw any new light on the fate of Raul Wallenberg? At a routine meeting that ended here on the evening of 5 December between the official representatives of the sides who have been charged with dealing with the case of the Swedish diplomat, the Soviet delegation handed over to their colleagues 43 documents, which were formerly reliably protected from publicity. This was already the third joint meeting of the working groups that has been held in the last few months.

The Swedish side has received many-sided information. An in-depth check of the Soviet archive stocks, as was reported at a news conference that was held on the results of the sitting, has permitted records restoring the chronology of Wallenberg's time in prison to be uncovered, in particular. The diplomat, who was arrested at the end of the war in Budapest where he was carrying out a humanitarian mission, was brought to Lefortovo [prison] at the beginning of February 1945.

Dates are specified for individual interrogations. The first, on 8 February, was—in keeping with the classical canons of the department of Beria and Abakumov—conducted during the night, and lasted three and a half hours. The second took place almost three months later—on 28 April, 1945. A record has also been found from 2 March 1947, reporting the transfer of the prisoner's things to the internal prison of the Ministry of State Security.

The search for documentary evidence is currently being carried out in many directions. On the instructions of USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, a thorough study is being made of all the archives where materials relating to the Wallenberg case might be kept. Documents are coming to light which increasingly expose the political intrigrues of the epoch of totalitarianism.

Party archives have been inspected. The highest levels of authority of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the CPSU—the Politburo, the presidium and then the Politburo—examined the draft replies to Stockholm's demarches regarding the fate of Wallenberg no less than 16 times over the 34 years. The Swedish side will also be able to acquaint themselves with memoranda to the leaders of the party from the leadership of the former structures of the state security service.

Will the documents discovered provide an answer to the main issue being dealt with by the joint investigation? "We are getting nearer to the truth, but we still cannot find it," Sergey Zhuravlev, deputy head of the second European administration of the Union Ministry of External Relations, who is head of the Soviet delegation at the working meeting, told journalists.

None of the existing versions is refuted. Hundreds of volumes have to be checked in the quest for new documents. But the investigation is progressing. The failure of the August putsch in the USSR eliminated from the corridors of power those who had impeded this work. The proposal that they should act together with the Swedish side had already been submitted long ago by Eduard Shevardnadze, and approved by Mikhail Gorbachev—but, the Soviet diplomat noted, it did not turn out to be possible to carry out this decision until after August.

In parallel with the work in the archives, cross examinations are being conducted with those who may have been a party to the investigation on the Wallenberg case. "We undoubtedly know a person who knows the truth. It has been established by documents that he interrogated the Swedish diplomat twice. But he denies this, and the conversations that have taken place up to the present time have not brought forth any results," Vyacheslav Nikonov, who is representing the leadership of the Interrepublic Security Service at the meeting, reported. He noted that in the course of the investigation both the period before July 1947, as well as the subsequent period when, according the official version, Wallenberg was no longer alive, is being investigated.

Hans Magnusson, the head of its Swedish part, an advisor of ministerial rank at the Swedish embassy in Moscow, assessed positively the results of the session of the joint working group. In Stockholm, he stressed, the documents received will be carefully studied. The diplomat has expressed the hope that a continuation of the constructive work will allow the whole truth about the fate of Raul Wallenberg to be learned.

Troop Withdrawal From Germany Status Reported

PM1012143591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 Second Edition p 2

[TASS report: "Withdrawal Proceeding According to Schedule"]

[Text] So far 105,000 of the 337,000 soldiers and officers of the Western Group of Forces have been sent home from Germany, as have 55,000 of the 205,000 civilian personnel and members of servicemen's families. This has been reported by the ADN agency.

The Soviet troops have already been completely withdrawn from 58 places where they were stationed. In all, the Western Group of Forces has released 260 military establishments and the German side has taken on 237 of them. As of today 33,000 units of combat equipment and transport families have been removed from Germany to the Soviet Union.

Supreme Soviet

Constitutional Committee To Review Commonwealth

LD0912182491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1758 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Novikov: "USSR Constitution Supervision Committee Convened"]

[Text] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)—A TASS correspondent has been told at the USSR Constitutional Supervision Committee that the committee has received numerous applications for its assessment, with regard to constitutional legality, of the situation that has come about as a result of the leaders of Belarus, RSFSR, and the Ukraine signing the agreement forming the Commonwealth of Independent States. In this connection, it has been decided to convene the Constitutional Supervision Committee on 11 December so it might consider appropriate issues within the bounds of its authority.

Deputies Appeal for 'Constitutional Order'

OW0912182691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Signatures were collected in the USSR Supreme Soviet Monday [9 December] under an appeal to President Gorbachev and the national Parliament to convene the 6th extraordinary congress of USSR People's Deputies.

The authors of the appeal, with MP [member of parliament] Vladimir Samarin at their head, want the congress to ward off the threat of the country's disintegration and "speedy progress towards a political and socio- economic catastrophe." They believe the agenda should include the restoration of constitutional order throughout the country, and the taking of radical political and economic measures to halt chaos and anarchy and prevent a civil war.

Mr. Samarin told IF [INTERFAX] that the call for an emergency congress ensued from the passing of a variety of anti- constitutional resolution leading to republican encroachment on the center's powers, such as control over the armed forces, the national power grid and the national bank.

Legislator Says Commonwealth 'Unconstitutional'

AU1012101491 Paris AFP in English 0956 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, Dec 10 (AFP)—A senior Soviet legislator has described the move by the three Slav republics to set up their own commonwealth as unconstitutional and accused the three republican leaders of going "behind the backs of their people," according to an interview received here Tuesday [10 December].

Anuarbek Alimzhanov, chairman of the Council of Republics—one of the two chambers of the Soviet parliament—noted in an interview with the independent Kazakhstan news agency KAZ-REVIEW that only the three leaders had taken part in the talks Sunday in Belarus.

"They acted without the approval of their respective parliaments, behind the backs of their people," Alimzhanov stated, adding that the Council of Republics planned to study the Slav accord when it meets on Thursday.

He said the now-defunct Congress of People's Deputies, the former full-scale parliament, had decided in September that "decisions of this magnitude could not be taken without the approval of all the leaders of the sovereign states and their parliaments."

Alimzhanov said the Russian parliament also planned to study the Slav plan on Thursday and added, "As far as I can tell, the deputies are far from approving of it."

He said Soviet and republican legislators met at the Kremlin Monday and into the early hours of Tuesday to debate the Slav plan.

Commonwealth Agreement To Be Discussed 12 Dec

OW1012124191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1150 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Thursday, December 12, the USSR Supreme Soviet will break its plenary meeting to discuss the decision of Russia, Belorussia and the Ukraine to abolish the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and form a Commonwealth of Independent States instead.

Ligachev Interviewed on Future of Country

LD1012125391 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 0745 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Our parliamentary correspondent, Aleksandr Ruvinskiy, is on the line from the Supreme Soviet Presidium building in the Kremlin. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Ruvinskiy] You know, I would obviously not have been able to talk to any of the people's deputies had I not agreed earlier to meet USSR People's Deputy Yegor Kuzmich Ligachev before the start of the USSR Supreme Soviet meeting scheduled for today, but now cancelled. Here he is, on the dot!

[Ligachev] Just as you are!

[Ruvinskiy] I understand that the lack of a meeting today is just as much a surprise for you as it is for me.

[Ligachev] Absolutely. I found out even later than you, since you were at the Kremlin tower and I was just going into the hall.

[Ruvinskiy] How do you assess the events currently going on in the political arena in our country?

[Ligachev] I think that it is still possible today to avoid the breakup of a great state. Tomorrow, as they say, will be too late. What should be done and what is the pity about the whole process connected with the drafting and conclusion of a Union treaty? It seems to me that what was done wrong was that, in effect, the people were excluded from the process of drafting and concluding the Union treaty. You will note that all these processes are occurring basically in the offices of presidents and in out-of-town dachas. The opinion of the people has to be taken into account. It was voiced clearly and definitely based on the results of the nationwide referendum. In my view, it is a unique fact in our history that the fate of the Soviet Union, whether it is to be or not to be, is being decided. I repeat, the masses of citizens, the working people, and the labor collectives have effectively been excluded from this process.

What should be done? It seems to me that a congress of peoples of the USSR should be convened in the very near future, one that will decide the fate of our fatherland. Nobody else can decide it. I think it will be necessary to include the people's deputies in this. Perhaps a USSR Congress of People's Deputies could precede it. That is one line.

A second line is that it is now definitely necessary to transfer the discussion and the actual conclusion of the Union treaty to all labor collectives, to the press, to the soviets at all levels. Only then can we include the people in this process. To conclude this issue, I think that what our country is to become is a matter that concerns not just the leadership, but first and foremost every one of us and our society as a whole.

[Ruvinskiy] Yegor Kuzmich, I get the impression that all the disputes about the Union treaty and about our new state boil down to whether it should have some rigid, firm center as leader of all the sovereign states, or whether there should not be any such center. That, I think, has now become the main stumbling block.

[Ligachev] I think you are right, Aleksandr Ilyich. In connection with this, I would just like to emphasize my view of this issue, how I see it. In my view, in the Union treaty we have to seek the optimum combination—the expansion of the rights and powers of the republics, but unfailingly, I believe, in combination with a capable and effective central authority. I cannot imagine that it would be possible to tackle nationwide issues, issues of the whole state, without any central bodies or any central authority. In my view, that would be to the detriment to the sovereign republics.

[Ruvinskiy] Yegor Kuzmich, taking the opportunity while you are here, I cannot fail to ask you something that probably worries all of our listeners very much. After all, the press has lately been publishing a mass of documents connected with financial operations abroad by the CPSU, with the transfer of major sums believed to amount to millions to communist parties of other states; sums that belong to the state. The fact is that we have not heard any denials or confirmations from any of the former party leaders. This is undoubtedly of interest to everyone. What light can you shed on this?

[Ligachev] To start with, I would like to say that every party—if we are talking about the party's funds—has a legitimate right to spend the funds as it sees necessary, including giving help to friendly parties. Such a procedure has been long established, including in relations between parties of a communist and socialist orientation. As for the various figures that have been quoted, gold and diamonds and much else, you can take it from me that this is something new and unknown to me. I think that a lot of it is improbable. I dealt with problems within the party, and had nothing to do with issues connected with expenditure. That was dealt with by departments whose job it was to work on strengthening and developing ties and expanding ties with other communist parties and with other countries. That is all I can say, quite honestly and frankly, as always.

[Ruvinskiy] Well, thank you, Yegor Kuzmich.

[Ligachev] If I might, I would like to go on for a minute or two. I think that, returning to your question, Aleksandr Ilyich, we will not, in my view, resolve the fundamental question of whether there is to be a Soviet Union or not until we create some sort of political underpinning for the country. In particular, I would call it a political bloc of patriotic forces, if you like.

In connection with this, I would like to voice the idea that the fate of our fatherland is being decided right now. It seems to me that literally all quarrels, all contradictions between parties and between leaders, should be cast aside. I think that the first thing that needs to be done, if we want to unite society, is to abolish all decrees connected with bans on the activities of the Communist Party. You will agree that it is not possible to unite society while splitting this society. It seems to me that it would be very good if such a statement appeared in public, under the banner of unification of all forces, with the slogan National [natsionalnyy] Interests and the Greatness and Unity of Our Motherland Above All Else. People of various political parties, with various political views and various political stands, should be represented, but unified by one issue: Let us stand up for our fatherland. I would like to say that, and to thank you and the listeners.

[Ruvinskiy] Thank you. I think that everything lately associated with the Communist Party is connected very directly with the coup attempt, as well. We probably cannot strike out what has happened in our life and pretend that this did not happen.

[Ligachev] Here I would like to ask for another half minute. [laughter]

[Ruvinskiy] Go ahead.

[Ligachev] I think you will agree with me, and it has already been recognized by the public, that we cannot equate the party with the activities of individual leading figures. The decision on these figures should have been made according to procedures, and party activities should have continued. The party did not support the putschists, and incidentally did not support those who were calling for a general political strike. Thus the party, in essence, kept to its former position and did not participate in this putsch. As for the putsch in general, I have to say this: I, for one, can see that the people who participated in this were trying to extricate the country from a very grave impasse. But they were mistaken about the means and methods for resolving this problem. I believe it is intolerable and ruinous to tackle these issues using the military, by means of a putsch, by means of a plot. I repeat that I, for one, believe that among those responsible are people who have done immense service for the motherland. They were trying to extricate the country from this critical situation. Their methods were no good, and I would even say adventurist.

[Ruvinskiy] Thank you. But there is another point of view, as well, according to which it is precisely thanks to these people that our country found itself at a dead end. We cannot exclude that point of view. Thank you once again, USSR People's Deputy Yegor Kuzmich Ligachev for this interview. [end recording]

Military Service Changes To Be Considered

PM0912171591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by "Our Correspondent" under the "Direct Line" rubric: "From the USSR Supreme Soviet. Length of Service To Be Cut"]

[Text] 6 Dec—The Union parliament is to make changes to the Law on Universal Military Service before the new year. Meanwhile a working group of the Soviet of the Union Committee for Armed Forces Affairs has been set up to finalize the draft changes to the law on Universal Military Service submitted by the USSR president.

As of 1 January it is planned to man the Army and Navy by combining the draft and contracts and also to change the length of active compulsory military service. At present the intention is to set the following periods of service: 18 months for enlisted men and NCO's in the Soviet Army and Navy coastal units and aviation; two years for seamen and petty officers serving on ships, vessels, and in Navy combat support coastal units and border troops' naval units; and one year for draftees with a higher education. It is thought that 10-20 percent of the posts held by drafted servicemen will be filled by people on contract in 1992.

A session of the Soviet of the Union Committee for Armed Forces Affairs also examined the question of military construction detachments. The committee reckons that the drafting of people working on economic construction sites into military construction detachments must stop and that these detachments must be disbanded by the middle of next year and their property handed over to the republics. The USSR defense minister's suggestion that USSR Defense Ministry military construction units (detachments) be reorganized into engineering and technical units was backed.

Political & Social

Reactions to New Commonwealth Elaborated

Gorbachev Statement Read on TV

LD0912200291 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Statement by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev on Brest agreement in Moscow on 9 December; from the "TV Inform" program—read by unidentified announcer]

[Text] In Minsk, on 8 December 1991, the leaders of Belarus, the RSFSR, and the Ukraine concluded an agreement on the establishment of a commonwealth of independent states. For me, as the country's president, the main criterion for assessing the document is the degree to which it conforms with the security interests of citizens, the tasks involved in overcoming the present crisis, the preservation of statehood, and the continuation of democratic transformations. The agreement has positive points. The Ukrainian leadership, which of late had not been active in the treaty process, took part in it. The document stresses the need to create a single economic space functioning on agreed principles, with a single currency and financial and banking system. A willingness is expressed to cooperate in the scientific, educational, cultural, and other spheres. A certain formula for cooperation in the military and strategic sphere is proposed.

This document, however, is of such significance and it affects so deeply the interests of the people of our country and the whole of the world community that it requires a comprehensive political and legal assessment. At any rate, the following is clear to me. The agreement explicitly announces the end of the existence of the USSR. Without question, each republic has the right to leave the Union. But the destiny of a multinational state cannot be determined by the will of the leaders of three republics. This matter can only be resolved by constitutional methods with the participation of all sovereign states and with due regard for the will of their people. The statement on ending the force of all-Union legal norms, which can only intensify the chaos and anarchy in society, is also unlawful and dangerous.

The haste with which the document has appeared also gives rise to bewilderment. It was not discussed either by the population or by the Supreme Soviets of the republics on behalf of which it is signed. Even more so as this occurred at the moment when the parliaments of the republics were discussing the draft treaty on a union of sovereign states elaborated by the USSR State Council.

In the current situation, in my deep conviction it is essential for all the Supreme Soviets of the republics and the USSR Supreme Soviet to discuss both the draft treaty on a union of sovereign states and the agreement concluded in Minsk.

As the agreement proposes a different form of statehood, which lies in the competence of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, it is essential to convene such a congress. Moreover, I would not preclude holding a nationwide referendum—plebiscite—on this issue.

Suggests Congress

OW0912201791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Excerpts] Following the conclusion in Minsk by the Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian leaders of an agreement establishing the Community of Independent States, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has called for the convocation of a Congress of USSR People's Deputies.[passage omitted]

In acknowledging that the Minsk agreement "has a number of positive aspects," Mr. Gorbachev noted that " the will of the leaders of the three republics cannot determine the future of a multinational counrtry."

According to sources said to be close to the President, Mr. Gorbachev has been thinking of various models of behavior in the present situation.

One option for him is to resign as the nations's top leader. Also, he might directly ask for the people's support for his efforts to preserve some kind of political union. Yet another option is to adopt "a well balanced evolutionary approach" to the developments

Yeltsin Meetin Viewed

LD0912202891 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] For almost one and a half hours today Gorbachev and Nazarbayev questioned President Yeltsin about the results of the meeting in Minsk. Neither Kravchuk nor Shushkevich flew to Moscow for the meeting with Gorbachev, but they proposed that Yeltsin should give an account of the results on their behalf. Thus, discussions were thereby excluded.

[Correspondent A. Peslyak] The president of Russia presented the position of the leaders of the three Slavonic states which had been agreed on in Minsk. Thus, since the weekend a new politico-psychological situation has appeared. One person was entrusted with speaking on behalf of the three. Added to the saving in time and transport is the fact that it is impossible for the other party to receive voluminous communication in return. You see that Boris Nikolayevich only replied to the questions put in the Kremlin within the framework of the new Bialowieza triangle. In keeping with the results of the conversation, it was agreed that the document of the three Slavs—that is, the way they see the further development of events regarding the future of our state—will be sent to the leaders of the other sovereign republics, to the parliaments where the working up of the draft Union treaty has been started.

In the course of the day the USSR president continued consultations with other state and public figures, particularly with President Mutalibov, Nabiyev, and (Muradov). According to Presidential Press Secretary Grachev, Gorbachev will make his views known regarding the document in the next few days. There was no State Council meeting.

With sad eyes, Grachev answered the questions of journalists, who were hungry in both the literal and figurative sense.

[Begin Grachev recording] The possibility was mentioned that among the structures of the leading bodies of the commonwealth there also will be the function of president. [end recording]

[Peslyak] Thus, the new law-based formation, which is not yet international, is open for others to unite with it. There will be an additional report on the structures of power to be found in it. This means that the funeral or the birthday is not taking place today. This means that once again we have to wait and see.

'Country Needs' Gorbachev

LD0912171891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1519 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Palariya]

[Excerpts] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)—The agreement signed yesterday [8 December] in Minsk among Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus will be sent to the parliaments of the other republics and will be discussed along with the draft treaty on a union of sovereign states as an alternative suggestion. [passage omitted]

Replying to a question as to how he sees Mikhail Gorbachev's role in the new situation, Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed that the Soviet leader is far from having exhausted all his opportunities. "The country needs him," the Kazakh president said with conviction.

Touching on the problem of the nuclear weapons located on the territory of the former Union republics, Nursultan Nazarbayev said that a treaty is necessary that confirms that strategic weapons will be administered from a single center.

Nazarbayev 'Completely Unaware'

LD0912222991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent Yevgeniy Zherebenkov on news conference given by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev in Moscow on 9 December; Nazarbayev remarks recorded]

[Text] [Zherebenkov] The agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, signed by the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus was a complete surprise to the leader of the fourth major republic of the former Union, Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev, as he frankly admitted at the news conference.

[Nazarbayev] I want to inform you that prior to this, prior to this meeting, I had conversations with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, with President Kravchuk, and with Supreme Soviet Chairman Shushkevich. What was said was that they would meet at the consultative meeting first and foremost in order to coordinate their positions on the eve of the transition to the market economy, and to talk about the future of the Union and the Union treaty in connection with the situation which really exists in the Ukraine, and about what was to be done further. Therefore when I flew here and gave an interview yesterday [8 December], I was completely unaware of the fact that a joint agreement would be adopted there—not a treaty but an agreement.

Well, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, whom I met today [9 December], together with Gorbachev—the three of us—confirmed that there is no formula at all mentioning a Slav union, and had such a thing been mentioned it would simply be incomprehensible to everyone, because if we start setting up unions on a national and ethnic basis, and then go on to religious or some other basis, well I don't know what depths we could sink to. I think that this is not the case. But this initiative—and today we came to an understanding that this initiative of the three republics will be distributed to the parliaments of the other republics and, together with the draft of the union of sovereign states, approved at the State Council—might be discussed in parallel as an alternative proposal. If this is so, then this whole affair changes, the more so as I have now familiarized myself with the content of this agreement.

As regards the creation of common coordinating bodies, this is no different from the treaty which we have already signed, this is an Economic Treaty, you remember. That is to say, a single-center administration of defense matters, of strategic armaments, now the coordination of matters of the economy, of customs, of foreign policy—that is to say, all the constituents exist and I don't see anything new in this.

[Zherebenkov] It is too early to regard as a fait accompli the formation of a new Union for which the leaders of the three republics acted as initiators, in Nursultan Nazarbayev's view. With his characteristic caution and pragmatism, he called for passions not to be whipped up and for people to calmly think over what has happened. Nursultan Nazarbayev believes:

[Nazarbayev] The leaders of the former Union, that is to say, of the republics—I also apply this to President Gorbachev—must stop frightening one another; they must not resort to pressure tactics or blackmail, and stop instilling fear into people that a civil war, bloodshed, etc will break out, that there will be a catastrophe. We, the leaders of the republics, and President Gorbachev, our function as leaders is to guarantee to the people that at our stage of development normal life is insured, that we move away from fear, and do everything to develop events in such a way that we are in control of these processes. I think that the heads of the republics and President Gorbachev have the possibilities and grounds to tell this to their people at this difficult time.

Nazarbayev on Congress

LD0912182391 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1700 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Here is how President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev reacted to the deputies' appeal—or rather possible appeal—on holding an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies at today's [9 December] news conference:

[Begin Nazarbayev recording] I take an understanding attitude toward these deputies' initiative. Unfortunately the events under way in the country indicate that, probably, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, and the whole people of the former Soviet Union themselves, should have an opportunity of expressing their views on all these processes. [end recording]

Gorbachev's Options Viewed

LD0912224391 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Commentary by Sergey Dorenko]

[Text] During their meeting today [9 December], Gorbachev was questioning Yeltsin about his own role after the Union is wound up. But today it is unclear whether the Union president is still, for example, commander in chief of the Armed Forces. In theory, Gorbachev can either calmly hand over power to the new commonwealth and even help by persuading the doubters in the Union authorities, or he can gather around himself supporters of the Union and join the opposition to the leaderships of Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine. Either option, evidently, would be fatal for Gorbachev as a politician, but conflict and confrontation with the new commonwealth would be fatal not only for him.

According to initial reports, Gorbachev is being anything but obliging when it comes to the Union. (Aleksandr Likhota) of the president's press service conveyed to a RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY correspondent

Gorbachev's words that the leaders of the three Slav republics have no mandate from their peoples or parliaments. Is it possible that this phrase signifies the beginning of a new confrontation between Gorbachev on one side and Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich on the other?

Other proponents of a single Union have also reacted to the Bialowieza accords. An initiative group of USSR people's deputies has already appeared to demand the immediate convocation of an extraordinary congress. The deputies intend to restore the constitutional order throughout the country, stop the chaos, and avert a civil war. Thus, the Union deputies hope to regain their role should society turn against the commonwealth of Russia, Belarus, and the Ukraine. Nonetheless, the man in the street is unlikely to stand up and fight for the socialist homeland in its previous form.

The force that could still realistically revive the USSR remains the Army. But the Army is both expecting and receiving better living conditions not from Union but republican authorities. The anxieties of officers and generals should be calmed by the fact that three republics are within 10 days of agreeing on their defense spending, and that the USSR's nuclear forces will remain under a single command system.

Other details of the new commonwealth's structure were covered by Burbulis and Kozyrev, members of the Russian Government, at a news conference today [9 December].

Shevardnadze Says 'Total Surprise'

OW0912192191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Monday [9 December] Eduard Shevardnadze asked for a legal opinion as regards the decision by the three Slav republics to set up a Community of Independent States. The Brest agreements of Russia, the Ukraine and Belorussia came as a total surprise to Mr. Shevardnadze, said a source close to Shevardnadze, to IF [INTERFAX]. The source gave to understand that Mr. Shevardnadze was not one of the leaders in the Union structures who had been consulted about the plans to set up a community.

Gorbachev Interview With Ukraine TV Broadcast

LD0812225691 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 1930 GMT 8 Dec 91

[Interview with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev by Ukrainian Television correspondent Zinoviy Kulik in Moscow, on 7 December; in Russian—recorded]

[Text] [This and following additions and variations of the interview were carried in a Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian rebroadcast at 2045 GMT on 8 December. Here Moscow TV adds: "[Kulik] Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich. I would like to express my sincere thanks to you for agreeing to our request for an interview, for your wish to address the Ukrainian people."]

[Gorbachev] As I understand it, this will be a conversation and you will try, in your questions, to inform me of what is at the center of public opinion in the Ukraine. I actually decided to respond to your invitation without delay because this conversation has great significance for me. I consider that our conversation will later be conveyed to the people of the Ukraine and I welcome your initiative.

[Kulik] Thank you. Mikhail Sergeyevich, during the past week, in connection with the all-Ukrainian referendum which confirmed the act of our state's independence, there has been not only quite understandable attention directed towards the Ukraine and its political life but there has, at times, also been a completely unjustified fanning—I would say—of political tension around the Ukrainian issue. What do you think, is this anxious mood of the Ukrainian people justified or has it, as it were, been heated up by the press or the mass media?

[Gorbachev] Well, I will discuss this with you. Perhaps this will go on a while but it is necessary to discuss. Even before the referendum, I was speaking generally in favor of all of our republics being sovereign, those which had voted for sovereignty and had adopted the appropriate declarations on sovereignty, and such declarations had been adopted by all of them. After that, indeed, some republics held referendums on the question of independence. This was seen as the strenghtening of this sovereignty. This is exactly how I saw this process in the Ukraine. At some stage, still during the preparation, this question was being tossed in—which, in general, was understandable. Moreover, a real situation has developed, which we remember. And, in order to...

[Kulik, interrupting] the August...

[Gorbachev] Yes, and in order to affirm and strenghthen its sovereignty the Supreme Soviet decided to take this course. Next some began to toss in the question that, in essence, to vote for independence is the same thing as to vote for breaking away from the Union, for secession from the Union, and so on. I do not accept such an interpretation. This is a substitution of the meaning. Sovereignty, enforced by voting for independence at the referendum, gives the Ukrainian state, the people of the Ukraine, an assurance for feeling like the full, full-blooded masters of the land where they live. It gives them full rights to participate in all the processes, solve all the problems. This is the first. Since all this speculation still continues, naturally, discussions about this are still going on. I should like to say that certain people have also made a fuss about this in the outside world. But here we are talking about very serious things—about our common destiny. Things should be made clear. As I have been saying, there is no doubt that the people of the

Ukraine are for cooperation with all the sovereign republics, for the new Union, for the new relations—not for destruction, but for the creation of something new.

I have to say that I receive a great deal of information. For instance, a month ago I received information about a poll conducted in Kiev, Moscow, Leningrad, Krasnoyarsk, Alma-Ata, and Novosibirsk, I think. I quoted the figures at the time. Now, incidentally, they have carried out a new poll in the same places—in the same places. In Moscow, 80 percent expressed themselves in favor of preserving the Union, a renewed and a new Union, naturally; in Kiev, the figure in favor was 64 percent of those questioned; in Alma-Ata, it was 72 percent—in Alma-Ata the figure has not gone up yet; it remains the same. I can't remember the other figures now. They gave me them only yesterday. If these polls.... I don't overestimate the significance of these polls but there is also other information, living, human information.

Well, I would ... it will be more understandable, I think, for the television viewers who are listening to us. The driver of my car came back from holiday—he's been working with me for about seven to ten years. It turns out that there was a tragedy in his family during his holiday, an old uncle of his died in Lugansk. He went to the funeral and spent some time there in Lugansk. They cannot think of themselves ... there we have lived and we will live together. The question doesn't even arise. He said ... He asked: But your Rukh [Ukraine People's Movement for Perestroyka], they shout independence, an independent Ukraine. But they say that Rukh came here to us twice. We said something to them and they don't come here any more now. We haven't got any. But you have voted, you have voted. The referendum. To be absolutely right it was before the referendum. You are going to have a referendum. You will be voting. We'll vote. We'll support. We felt, we lived, and we felt that we were going to live in one state.

Finally some interesting information yesterday came in from a totally unexpected quarter. A member of the U.S. Embassy staff travelled to Kiev and decided to go there and see for himself how the referendum voting was going, what was the mood of the people, what they were thinking about. He has a command of the Russian language and spent the whole day walking about Kiev. He carried out his own opinion poll. He shared this poll. He talked to 20 people. He chose them specially. There were workers, intellectuals from the scientific world. He said this: I asked them and all 20 said yes, we voted for the independence of the Ukraine. All of them. And I asked them all a second question. What do you think about the Union and the Ukraine's participation in the Union, in the creation of a new Union? Eighteen people favored the preservation of the Union, its renewal and for the Ukraine's participation in this process. So there you are. Such is the information coming in.

[Kulik] So let us, after all ...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] Therefore, therefore, I think that neither politicians nor journalists, who espouse a certain point of view, should foist on the people the idea that having voted for independence, the people have opted for rupturing everything and all that has for centuries linked these peoples who live and, I am certain, intend to live together. Otherwise...

[Kulik] This has already been proclaimed.

[Gorbachev] Yes.

[Kulik] In other words, it is not a case of the rupturing of ties. But since we are talking of clarity, Mikhail Sergeyevich, I would very much like to hear this. How can, say, independence be reconciled—in other words it either exists or it doesn't—with the creation of a new Union? Since we are always talking about this dialectical connection we should probably also talk about how this independence is to be achieved within the Union?

[Gorbachev] Could I first interview you a little?

[Kulik] Please do.

[Gorbachev] That will make it easier for me to proceed. What do you think, is Germany independent?

[Kulik] Yes.

[Gorbachev] Is France independent?

[Kulik, laughing] Well, relatively.

[Gorbachev] There you are, there you are. It is independent, is it?

[Kulik] The whole world is integrated.

[Gorbachev] But independent.

[Kulik] Yes, independent.

[Gorbachev] Are they sovereign states?

[Kulik] Yes, they're sovereign.

[Gorbachev] And have you noticed the debates they are now about to have at the meeting in Holland? There they will be debating the matter of opting for developing the European Economic Community which, incidentally does not just have an economic treaty but also the European Parliament, which it elects, and the European Council and other political institutions which serve all this. And that is just the economic treaty. So, these states now want to reinforce all that they have with a single currency union and a political union. Both Kohl, Chancellor Kohl and President Mitterrand in their remarks over the last few days, especially Chancellor Kohl, have been stressing that if there is economic union and currency and financial union but no political union, none of it will work.

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, that is their level of development.

[Gorbachev] Hang on a minute. This is ... just let me tell you.

So they are proceeding consciously, being sovereign; they are sharing part of their sovereignty, because they can see that there is advantage in this, and so they don't lose their independence. Why should the Ukraine, or Russia, or Belarus, or Kazakhstan, or Kyrgyzstan lose their sovereignty if they make the choice themselves? They want to take part in the creation, the construction of a new Union—the kind of union that might meet their interests—and moreover the current stage of the republics' development, their current role, their possibilities. But at the same time they see a range of issues in which they have to act together: cooperate in a common market—otherwise we know already where a breakdown in communications will lead; cooperation in terms of defense—otherwise each one has to bear the burden of armaments—it's completely incomprehensible—and so on.

You know that in Estonia a troupe has actually fallen apart in the theater—the opera, and ballet—because there were representatives of all nationalities working there. After the proclamation they dispersed; the theater ended. Scientific centers are falling apart which used to thrive, cooperating either with Moscow or with Kiev, in mutual relations, resolving major problems. So you must understand; they are thumping the table. Scientists are insisting on the need to retain it; any scientific symposium is attended by all the representatives of the 15 republics. The Culture Fund is attended by 15 republics. Twelve ministers of culture besieged the State Council so they would set up a committee or council which might coordinate cultural links. These are people, human life, how can you tear it into pieces? We all read one another, we communicate, it's us, our lives, who wants to coerce?

Those who have been thrown up by democracy over the last two years are such oracles, they have become such prophets, and all these 10 centuries over which this material has been created—they don't understand anything in that? So all these threads stem from there, from there, from people. There is no danger of any kind to the independence and sovereign status of the states in the new Union, especially as we have conceived of it. After all, the only thing that remains there is what is necessary in the interests of the republics, and not what tears something out. This is not the mythical or bureaucratic center that held on to everything, and was always oppressive. It's the new Union center—well, if it can be called a center—and it is interstate and interrepublic, and it will continue to be shaped in that way: all on the basis of the parity of the republics. And so there is no...[changes thought] What we have here is the acquisition of a new quality.

What is surprising is that while the self-determined, independent states, having seen the advantage, are integrating, moving toward each other, yet we, in a difficult situation when we should be changing our economy, when we are moving toward the market, when we should be changing the structure, carrying out conversion, when the people, the working class, all those who work in production, are under a colossal pressure, suffering great hardship because of the breakups which have already led to stoppages, where the miners do not mine coal, the blast furnaces have stopped because the coke is not delivered, and many other things, because the state structures which should be regulating this economy do not function—during this time we want to divide it up. I think this is insane. I do not know. How do you see this?

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, I am simply not ready to adopt your position right away.

[Gorbachev] I am not asking you to. Let people listen to us, but I will tell you everything, so that they will know in the Ukraine that in my person they have a man who likes this land, this Republic—even more than likes. You know this, and anyway, we are not here to talk about this. But, they should know my opinion. I do not have any political interests here, apart from my conviction that if we allow ourselves to make a mistake now in deciding the question of what the Union should be like—will it be something totally strange, or something new, but efficient; dynamic, with consideration given to the new role of the sovereign states—if we make a mistake now, we will get ourselves into such a mess for many years to come, not to mention what will be happening in just the nearest months and years. Therefore, I should say this with extreme frankness, and will not spare anyone, either myself or anyone else.

[Kulik] No question about that. Mikhail Sergeyevich, one other thing: You are very right in your description of today's situation. I have no questions here. But actually, the blast furnaces and mines do not work, and so on, not because of republican separatism, but because of the collapse of central power, so to speak—in other words, that same power that in former times was regulating these links and supplies by administrative methods. There are two ways of solving the question—either on the basis of the bilateral links between the said Ukraine with Russia, Belarus, and so on, or by returning to the same things—the pressure from the center. In other words, if the center is to be different, if it does not exercise pressure anymore, will the connections work, without the bilateral ones? And how would you break these bilateral connections if the process is already well under way? Agreements have been signed with a whole number of republics; people sincerely trust in them, both Ukrainian and Russian. In this situation the role of a coordinating center is one thing, but the role of a commanding center is something else.

[Gorbachev] But tell me—the fact that such great stress is being placed on bilateral links—do you not suspect that these are the people who are greatly devoted to the old structures, and not to market relations, and not to economic relations, but are those who wish to command and allocate? Have you not thought about this?

[Kulik] No, this aspect somehow....

[Gorbachev, interrupting] But I am now trying, so that everyone in the Ukraine might hear this. So what is occurring? The redistribution of powers has led to everything, the whole economy, now being in the hands of the republics. Is that not so? Yes, that is right. They are assimilating it, almost all of it apart from what needs, what is needed by everyone. So what have we now? Bilateral relations are being concluded. The Ukraine has concluded them, for example, with Belarus, or with Kazakhstan. Bilateral agreements have been signed; someone at least is delivering. So, after this, sugar is supplied only from one place, coal from somewhere else, as promised, sheet metal from one place, ore from another, and so on. Agreement has been reached. What happens after this? How will this be carried out?

[Kulik] In accordance with the accords....

[Gorbachev, interrupting] How will it be carried out? Well, let us imagine that we are now the managers of enterprises.

[Kulik] Yes. We will seek transport links, will seek the resources which we....

[Gorbachev, interrupting] Wait, wait, no, no, no. That is not it. When these volumes and quotas start to be sold, the order comes that you should supply sheet metal... [broadcast temporarily interrupted] [The Moscow TV broadcast adds the following: "supply it to a certain consumer.

["[Kulik] That is clear.

["[Gorbachev] It is a state order.

["[Kulik] A state order.

["[Gorbachev] A state order. It will also be necessary to give you a state order to supply Russia and, in fact, the other 12 to 15 republics.

["[Kulik] In accordance with the accords.

["[Gorbachev] So this way the adminstration-by-command method of running the economy is being implemented on the basis of bilateral accords, and the single economic space is being destroyed. What results is different from what I uphold, from what I am committed to. I believe in an economic space, in our common market, in proprietors. Taking advantage of economic freedom, these proprietors should be able to market their products, setting their own price via exchanges. By means of markets they establish...[pauses] they put a value on their product. Links are established."] This is how they are reshaped on the market, but the bilateral connections are a transformation of the bureaucratic center, and it is bureaucratization in the management of the economy on the republican level. But the main thing is that people should sit in all of the 12 republics, and do what the old center did. Only you know, all of the enterprise managers are saying that this is an even worse option. The old center was a long way away, and these have a direct stranglehold on them every day. It worked out that barriers or fences were erected—one thing was to be handed over, something else was not to be handed over, one thing was to be sent, another thing was not to be dispatched. In doing so they tore apart the market in which the producers were supposed to be the chief protagonist; they tore it apart into 12 internal markets.

[Kulik] But did we really have a market, Mikhail Sergeyevich? I don't think we have had one up to now, have we?

[Gorbachev] No, what they tore apart was the market we are moving toward, the space is what they are tearing apart. Then what else are they doing? The republics think that they are finally running things. Nothing of the sort. If you look closer you will see that they are not running anything. It is those who are producing the output who are running things, and this comes out through whatever channels and methods, and that is how it should be. This is the way to open the way because there are rules of the game in the market, market rules, which are the same for everyone. And it is these rules of the game, in the context of these rules of the game, that producers of goods have to operate. These may be, in one case, owners or proprietors or shareholders, in another case peasants, or in yet a third case a collective farm—in other words there are various forms, a mixed economy. But all of them are masters of their own production, who will settle things through the market.

So let us not idealize the idea of two-way links. Two-way links are needed for survival, and this is an administrative method of running things, but it is not a permanent way. It is not a basis for an economic setup. The basis for an economic setup is a single market, with common rules and with freedom for producers. That is what a market is. The role of the state lies in a taxation policy. As for taxation policy, providing incentives in one sphere or another, well, incentives can be provided for peasants. Things have to be made easier. Not only should taxation ease things for peasants, it should ease things also for those who make capital investment in agriculture. If taxation is lifted or reduced, then capital will flow in. We need to expand the range of goods now in light industry and the food industry. We need to lift taxes, and then investment will flow in, because without taxes there is an interest in injecting investment. That is real economic management, management of economic life. All the rest that you want to talk about is the old center copied 12 times over.

[Kulik, laughing] I agree.

[Gorbachev] Just look how often you hear we—we, we, we—that's all.

[Kulik] In this situation....

[Gorbachev, interrupting] This is banking on people's ignorance.

[Kulik] Yes, that's understood.

[Gorbachev] They want to cloud people's awareness, and nothing more. But when the market is intact, without barriers or limits, and those producing the goods feel themselves wherever they may be—well, then the market has to be serviced, and there is a need for the structures which Europe has already reached, and indeed is already carrying further and perfecting—institutions both economic and political.

[Kulik] But Europe has already gone through all this, whereas we are just at the beginning of the path.

[Gorbachev] Oh, come off it! If that is what you are saying, then I have to tell you that you haven't got a clue what we are like. And I beg your pardon for replying to a question that I asked myself, because I see that you do not understand it. And if you, an educated person, do not understand—and having chatted to you I can see that you are a person who is knowledgeably prepared and sharp, nonetheless [Kulik laughs]—so who are we then? That is the most important thing.

This world has taken shape over 10 centuries. After all, we are not saying that we have to create a union-...[changes thought] Well, 12 or 15 states decided; we have until now been within the limits of our own history. We took our own paths, but came to a level of historical development when we realized that we ought to unite. We began to think what kind of union to create. That is one situation. That is approximately what is happening in Europe. But there is a completely different situation in our country. We took shape throughout those 10 centuries. For good or bad, successfully or not, that is the reality. We have scattered, and that goes especially for Russians and Ukrainians, Slavs who played a decisive role in the formation of this complex and enormous world. We scattered all over this land. When I look at the elections in Kazakhstan, 40 percent are Kazakhs, 40 percent are Russians, and others make up 20 percent, or 19 or so percent. There are Germans and Ukrainians there. It's clear that everyone is represented there, so to speak. That is the extent to which our peoples are scattered. Do you see?

Seventy-five percent of people live outside their own republic, but they feel they are living in their own country. They are citizens. They have full rights, the same social, labor, and political legislation. Everything is the same. They have no limitations anywhere. They feel this. That is a colossal thing, and these are realities. And then, we have no state borders between us within the state. We have administrative borders, and it never entered anyone's head to put up border posts and lay down a border. Furthermore, 70 percent of these borders between the republics were designated on the decisions of rayon executive committees and rural soviets.

That is what we are like. Why was it like that? Because we didn't need them. And in order to show that we don't need them, I'll now come to the most acute issue, which cannot be ignored under any circumstances. Why didn't we need them? Because we considered certain conventions solely for economic activity. You remember that there was no Lipetsk Oblast, and then suddenly it appeared. Certain oblasts were not there, and then they made their appearances. They mastered the Virgin Lands, and five or so oblasts from the Virgin Lands joined with and formed part of Kazakhstan. In 1954 the Crimea made its appearance in the Ukraine. Is that a bad thing or a good thing? I welcome that. Perhaps not everyone welcomes it, but I believe that since the Ukraine has now been formed it is a very full-blooded and interesting republic. But if one were to go back to 1923, when the Don basin and Kharkov joined—all of this is normal, it's all in one country, no questions arise with us.

But let's now think. So that's it. We're dividing up. And tomorrow 14 Russian-speaking millions in the Ukraine already live in another state. You'll say: Wait a minute, citizenship can be resolved, a Union citizenship can still be preserved.

[Kulik] Moreover, 90 percent of these 14 million have already voted in favor of wanting to live in the Ukraine.

[Gorbachev] I also think that they must live in the Ukraine.

[Kulik] That's why I don't see any issue of principle here.

[Gorbachev] No, no, no, just a minute. Tomorrow they become not citizens of the Union, is that how you understand it? How do you understand it?

[Kulik] No. They voted that....

[Gorbachev] Wait a minute, wait a minute. What did they vote for? This is the reality. Tomorrow they are already no longer citizens of the Union.

[Kulik] Yes, they are citizens of the Ukraine.

[Gorbachev] Of the Ukraine.

[Kulik] In principle nothing has changed in their status.

[Gorbachev] How come? Today, as citizens of the Union, they go, they make a decision, something hasn't worked out with the relatives there in the Ukraine, in some village somewhere, they pick up and go off to live in Siberia. They leave the Donbass and mine coal. And all their rights and civil rights go with them. Political, economic, and social rights, too—everything. Everything that's been earned there is credited to him here as well: his length of service, everything. All the privileges are credited. But that will not continue to be the case. These will be different states.

[Kulik] But these things can be settled at an interstate level.

[Gorbachev] So citizenship is needed.

[Kulik] Yes.

[Gorbachev] Union citizenship is needed.

I'll get on to that—so now each state, so we divide the Armed Forces.

[Kulik] Why?

[Gorbachev] What?

[Kulik] Why should we divide the strategic arms?

[Gorbachev] No, wait—you have proclaimed that you will create armed forces in the Ukraine.

[Kulik] Yes, a national guard.

[Gorbachev] But these are armed forces; what do you mean, national guard? Armed forces. So tomorrow, we, this most unique defense space—only the United States and we have it—where strategic forces are in operation, forces for observation and surveillance of the whole situation, where the dislocation is put together in accordance with a doctrine, and if I lay out a map for you now—and I'll lay one out on Monday [9 December] for the republican leaders—then you'll see how they are dislocated...

[Kulik, interrupting] I understand.

[Gorbachev] I have to tell you this isn't a subject for everything. Then it emerges that we and you—well, they say, strategic arms, well, that too, this way and that—they even want to place this in doubt, even though this is totally—another piece of madness. But say tomorrow 15 armies, or 12 armies, have been formed. They are standing there. But as a result of the fact that the stationing of armed forces in the Baltic, Leningrad, Kiev—these are all borders—we start dividing them. Or is that property? [Kulik laughs] No, answer me.

[Kulik] Yes, it's property, proclaimed as property.

[Gorbachev] So then Russia stays with the nuclear missiles. And everything that was done and created—and Russia, of course, place it on the altar—if we count up how much military equipment it gave and what it paid, this is property?

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, I think the Ukraine...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] You have to take it to its conclusion. So we start breaking it up, transporting it, and we undertake all this with the Army, and as a result create 15 armies. The Army will take a long look at these politicians, and say: My God, look whose hands the country has ended up in! Generations spent 10 centuries creating the state. How many generations will come after us? And these have found themselves in this situation; they want to rip it up, the whole world, break it across their knee, the fates of millions of people. This idea is already in the air. So look. If we are dispersing, we have to settle all the issues—on citizenship—we have to settle them. And territory—do we have to settle it?

[Kulik] Yes.

[Gorbachev] We have to. Now the Baltic, settle it all. We have to reach agreement on defense. So we have started settling territory. What do you think? You will say, of course, that things should be as they are.

[Kulik] In principle, yes, and in principle there exists such an accord between the republics.

[Gorbachev] This agreement was within the Union. And the Union still exists, even although you people say sometimes things like—there is no Union—or—the former Union. No, this is, you know, not just a turn of phrase, or point of grammar; this is reality, the people, this is life, the society—this is the Union. Not what you would shape up around it and on its foundations later. So the Union exists. Then people will ask here: Why should five oblasts in Kazakhstan, which were always Russian, and where only Russians are living—why were they given away by a decision? Return them. It is normal. Why should we think that if such is the case, the Crimea—so much of Russian history is connected with fighting for the Crimea...

[Kulik, interrupting] Two hundred years. The Crimea was Russian for 200 years only.

[Gorbachev] But how long were they fighting for the Crimea?

[Kulik] That is a different question. And who was fighting?

[Gorbachev] Yes, yes. Of course not only Russia. I am not the way you think. We will come to this later, you and I, and see who came from those parts—perhaps I belong there more than you. I simply asked the question which life itself will ask. If you have researched this subject, well, you will know that I have already raised this question one or one and a half years ago.

I suddenly realized that if such serious clashes were developing because of a territorial, language, or other question, then if this world begins to divide up, to divorce—no, we will not be able to divorce. We will get ourselves into such a mess that we will not be able to escape from it. Then we will set about sorting out the borders. Moreover, we already have our argumentation: the 15 armies. We have our argumentation; we can make our positions clear. And what next?

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, excuse me please, why are we talking about divorce all the time? Couldn't this process be called something dfferent? We started with perestroyka. Now let's say we are moving from what was created as a communal kitchen apartment into the self-contained apartments within the same block. Is this a divorce? In other words, this is the axiom: We are doomed to live together forever. The Ukraine will never divorce Russia or Belarus, never.

[Gorbachev] No, your understanding of this is absolutely wrong. We began perestroyka in order to transform the economy, our multinational state and political process. Everywhere we are making progress. In the economy—

toward mixed ownership and the market; in politics—we arrived at free elections, the multiparty system, competition—and are progressing forward, learning. We are still not good politicians, but we will pick it up. Life has begun to flow along the stream in which we have directed it.

And finally, the main thing—in particular, in that world, that complex world where millions of people have intermingled, like so—that, too, should be democratized. Well, I see that there are two forms of self-determination: either through the redistribution of powers and sovereignty, preserving the Union, or through the rupture of it; I will be direct—the experience of Yugoslavia and of all the others. But well, why then? Are we more stupid than all the rest? Well, in Spain, in Madrid, Bush, the king of Spain, and Prime Minister Gonzalez tried to persuade me, spent three hours trying to persuade me that we needed the Union. [Kulik laughs] That is amazing—just imagine—I couldn't be persuaded that we needed the Union! [Kulik laughs] I went to the State Council, and I told them there what we had come to, and what a situation we had got ourselves into, when we were being taught that the Union was necessary. Did you hear Walesa yesterday?

[Kulik] I was on the road at the time.

[Gorbachev] Who heard Walesa? Yesterday, Walesa was shouting out on Soviet television: Support Gorbachev! The Union. Everything must be done as he has begun. The republics had every opportunity—both internally, for implementing domestic policy...[changes thoght-]...but the Union must be preserved; otherwise there will be disintegration, and that will lead to us all perishing in that disintegration.

[Kulik] A gloomy forecast.

[Gorbachev] A gloomy forecast. But I say to you that the time has come that that must not be overlooked. I don't want that at all. Therefore I don't see any other path now than the path of reform through sovereignization, through the deep redistribution of power. And the new Union—it must be new—will be formed by the republics. Only the powers which are necessary are left, and in that new treaty what powers are at issue? Defense—you and I say that there should be defense. We say a united market, the economic treaty—we say that it will be necessary, and that in connection with that powers are determined by the Interstate Economic Committee. We speak of a coordinated foreign policy because that is in the interests of the community. Look at how (?hard Kohl is working). He is trying to get the EC to implement a coordinated foreign policy.

[Kulik] Incidentally, they've got that.

[Gorbachev] Now—but he is making that position particularly tougher now. We will coordinate our policy, too. But what does coordination mean? While agreeing on the main approaches, on the main directions of the Union, there will be some questions of security, global questions, and of the whole economy, the foreign economic implementation of the draft. The republics must do all of that; it's all up to them. We are dividing up the debt. Currency will go to the republics. [Kulik] That's quite clear. But well, what will be left for that sovereign state with no name at all?

[Gorbachev] Everything will remain. Everything.

[Kulik] Defense won't be left. Finances won't be left; the economy has been taken away.

[Gorbachev] Just hold on. How is it that these finances do not remain?

[Kulik] Well, how do you think? There is a single space. Well, take a specific situation—Boris Nikolayevich's announcement of price liberalization. Well, in such a situation, if there is sovereignty over one's own economic territory, how in principle can the standard of living which exists in the Ukraine—not the highest, perhaps, but it is the one we have—how can that be preserved?

[Gorbachev] Well, I will tell you. I will ask you to stop there, because this is the crux of the matter.

[Kulik] OK

[Gorbachev] When I took a look at how the Kiev papers were reporting, were covering the question prior to the referendum, prior to the vote, to help the people get their bearings and make up their minds, prices in Moscow and prices in Kiev were regularly quoted. And they thought that they had put their finger on the truth of the problem. That that's all there is to it. For them to protect themselves—that kind of thing doesn't happen. Actually, you can protect yourselves, and from Russia, too. But no, that does include Russia. If you say that you want to protect yourselves, and from Russia, too...

[Kulik, interrupting] We are talking about protecting our standard of living.

[Gorbachev] Well, including your standard of living. But if—incidentally, your standard of living will actually depend on how Russia cooperates with others; otherwise it will go down. You have to realize that clearly.

[Kulik] We all realize that.

[Gorbachev] When you were saying that in tonnes per [not further specified], Stavropol Kray would organize two tonnes for its own republic and others—that is nonsense. That's not the way. That is a primitive way.

[Kulik] Yes.

[Gorbachev] But such methods have been used. Yet there are cases where the Ukraine receives 100 or 90 percent just from other republics, from Russia. And this happens against colossal opposition—vehicles, grain harvesters, and much else which I will not list—equipment and so on...

[Kulik] ...going in the other direction, too.

[Gorbachev] Yes, I am saying that. I do not indeed want to belittle the role. On the contrary, the Ukraine's role is irreplaceable in all spheres—political, defense, economic. No. I simply want everything to be seen as it really is. Everything as it really is. So attempts to suggest that in our republic we have the best sausage—the longest and fattest—and prices which are a bit lower—well, if you build all your deliberations about the fate of the Union and of the Ukraine on that kind of thing, the way it looks to us is that this is the most primitive of philosophies. I do not want to put the Ukrainian people down for a philosophy foisted on them by the politicians.

You need to think about the common fate. Nobody will actually be able to protect you in the way a common market with agreed rules of the game will be able to. Just look, the premiers have just spent a week sitting down to agree prices, taxation, the whys and wherefores of debts, approaches, measures to provide incentives for producers. They spent a week agreeing on all this, and in the end they reached agreement. That is what protection is about. And protection for Russia from the Ukraine? Because the Ukraine could also punish...

[Kulik, interrupting] Yes, yes.

[Gorbachev] Russia, too, should not overestimate—no, all of us are actually very dependent. This is the way we have come about. This is not the same thing as the British Empire. One country, then another, has broken away and gone its own way. Even so, this was a most painful process, which has still not yet been completed.

But we've settled in. We've mastered it. We've got going, as it were, you know. It's expanded.

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, nothing is everlasting on the face of the earth.

[Gorbachev] Therefore the point about having to defend oneself, about our being able to do things better having metamorphosed somewhere and isolated ourselves, is a mistaken policy. It is mistaken.

[Kulik] I agree with you completely.

[Gorbachev] Quite the contrary. Efforts therefore have to be united. You say, but what is left? What is left? You surprise me very much with your old-fashioned approach. Everyone's doing it. Everything that's here is ours. Everything that's here—we give the commands. But that's not the point. The producer is the one who gives the commands. Or do you not intend to move to the market, to the new forms of ownership?

[Kulik] We do intend to.

[Gorbachev] Why, then, does the state have to interfere? The rules of the game—by all means, taxation policy—by all means. But beyond that, it doesn't matter whether it's a Union body or a republican one. There is federal tax, there is republican tax, there is local tax.

And incidentally, here I have to say how the republics fight to save face and their own sovereignty, and how they crush self- management. Donetsk, the Donbass—these are states. I don't know, when Degtyarev was there, and when Stavropol was friendly with the Donbass and with Donetsk, it was 23 million of steel and 104 million of coal [units not specified]; it was the sea, the shipping directorate; it was farms that fed them to a considerable extent and supplied vegetables to Kiev—he was particularly proud of that, was Degtyarev. A state—5.5 million people. So what, do you leave it without rights? I went to Irkutsk and they say that the republics, having broken the center and seized everything, came to a stop, and thereafter considered the process finished. In what way finished? This is a principal region. There are enterprises there, there are all the collectives, real life is there. Why does this region have nothing, this region which carries responsibility for the ecology, for amenities, for housing, for everything that takes place there, where life is to be found? For it isn't in the capitals, it's outside the capitals.

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, we have...

[Gorbachev, interrupting] The process, you see—I want to continue...

[Kulik] I want to confirm that, too.

[Gorbachev] Rights have to be given there, too. But once again rights that he who is producing—that when output is produced in his region, he obtains things for the region by means of taxation policy, that through some kind of taxation policy he stimulates one or the other. This, therefore, is the case, though you say: What remains? Everything remains for us. But you reason only along the lines of taking things from the scrounger, and nothing going beyond that.

[Kulik] Why so?

[Gorbachev] This happens in Russia, too; it happens in Kazakhstan, everywhere, in every republic. But one should be thinking about the new world, about totally different relations. You put it to me point blank, and I'll put it to you point blank.

[Kulik, laughing] I don't put it to you point blank, Mikhail Sergeyevich. I simply wanted to say this: The idea of federalism does exist in the Ukraine. Political forces, say, are divided into federalists and (?the assembly).

[Gorbachev] Zinoviy Vladimirovich, here I would like to say—so that everyone can hear me—and I want everyone in the Ukraine to understand me, both Ukrainians and Russians, and all those who live there.

I very much want the Ukraine to be preserved as it is, the whole of this political, territorial and economic unit; I very much want this. But I am convinced that this can hardly happen if the path of break-up and destruction is taken, if such movements get going—and they are already in motion. I don't know, surely you must sense this in Kiev? They have come in heaps, you know, I have received heaps of letters saying: stop the referendum if it is being held under the slogan of "Down with the Union." Particularly where individuals abroad are concerned. I was simply in a difficult position. In March we said: Stop the referendum. What more do we need; who is urging that the will of the people be changed? For that reason, in the new Union, with a profound redistribution, with real sovereignty, with a Ukrainian state, there will be all the manifestations of this, and united in a new Union, a democratic one, a decentralized one, even a nonintegrated one.

[Kulik] Yes, but that is...

[Gorbachev] No, decentralized, rather.

[Kulik] Yes, yes.

[Gorbachev] Yes, but integrated via the economy, and that's simply it, like that. This, I think, is the right path. As for the other path—heaven forbid! Heaven forbid! The situation in Yugoslavia has made me think very profoundly, and so I have now dropped any restraints in order to tell our people, and I am saying this to all the Ukrainian people: I am very concerned that we might unthinkingly, in euphoria, confuse ethnic issues with democracy and store up such trouble for ourselves that several generations afterwards will not be able to deal with it.

[Kulik] Do you see real causes, the possibility of what you have just spoken of, in the Ukraine?

[Gorbachev] For some reason, you know, I am convinced that the Ukrainians, and the Russians that live there, on this soil, live a good life, a life together, there have not been any problems. So, you and I have never made clear just what we are.

[Kulik] That is, where our origins are?

[Gorbachev] I will now make clear what I am, I had started already explaining: What have we come to?

[Kulik] Perhaps we could come back to this?

[Gorbachev] We'll get back to it. You will ask. I have explained it, and sorted out what I am, so to speak. But what have we come to, when we explain it, and we can...[Gorbachev changes thought] then the next day follows what is already going on in the Baltics. You know that a UN human rights commission and others have already started working on the Baltics and warning that they will refuse them credits, and all that, because they are oppressing people?

[Kulik] But there is none of this in the Ukraine.

[Gorbachev] There will be. I can assure you, it will happen. If the Ukraine goes, then something will start that will later...It will happen. I know this already. Just look, we can't do anything in Moldavia. It will affect everything. I cannot allow myself not to use every opportunity to prevent Ukrainians and Russians from suddenly splitting up at this most crucial and most promising stage. Indeed, there is the Russian Federation, the Russian state, there is the Ukrainian state, and for them suddenly to start tearing it all up, and thus tearing up the whole Union...[Gorbachev changes thought] I will use everything, as far as going over the heads of all the politicians to the people. I still have many levers to use. I won't say what I will do, but I have only begun to fight.

[Kulik] A break-up is in progress, but it is not Russia or the Ukraine that are to blame for this, Mikhail Sergeyevich. I see no blame for the Ukraine in the fact a break-up is going on in the economic...

[Gorbachev] Let us Russians and Ukrainians, Slavs, not shed responsibility for what is going on in the Union. We too are ... no, we will not shed responsibility. We are answerable for it, primarily for what goes on today and what there will be tomorrow. So, no, I hope that the Ukrainians will hear me, and not only hear me with their ears, but also with hearts, and feel my profound concern that I want to bring home to them.

You know, here the politicans and pseudo-politicians, and your brother journalists, still want to try to play it like this: Here's Gorbachev, his power is fading, and he... Well, to begin with, this has to be said: If Gorbachev were clinging to power like that, and if it were so unbearable for him to share power, then he would quite simply never have started all this. And 10 years would be enough for him, or perhaps more, taking into account...

[Kulik] [passage indistinct]

[Gorbachev] Yes. I began this process. I am not changing my choice. I am committed to it. But I must also... when we make progress in this question, when we move away from an authoritarian state, in which peoples, their initiatives, independence, and statehood were repressed, we must be careful not to go to the opposite extreme, disintegration with all its extremely grave consequences. I must see a role for myself. I began this and I bear the greatest responsibility for ensuring that this process is stopped in time. We are on the brink. Beyond that point begins anarchy and chaos.

I cannot fail to say this to people. Let them hear, they have to know. Even in a Union, we will need immense efforts to overcome this disintegration that has taken place, and has taken place not only in the economy, but also in society.

This is very serious.

[Kulik] Will we avert this process?

[Gorbachev] I don't think we have lost yet. It is here, where this path begins, that we have to stop, and I have to tell you there is nothing more to be redistributed away from the Union. It's all already there. Only these functions remain. And I think that is right. We now have to consolidate everything—the common market, the new approach, a defense union, draw up what political structures there will be, and so on. And it is in connection with this that I say: it is not I who need this, not I, I just bear the responsibility, perhaps the greatest responsibility, and that is why I started it, I have encouraged it, and I will participate in this process to the end.

There may be those who would say: He needs to be president, to be in command, and so on. But who knows whether I even intend to stand as a candidate or not? Who knows, apart from me? It's all a load of rubbish. It's conjecture, pure conjecture, cheap talk that they lay on people, to confuse them. No, the question is one of the people's destiny, of life. If we pile all this chaos and disintegration that will start if we start splitting up on top of all these difficulties...

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich.

[Gorbachev] We will be cursed by everybody, and not only... Even those that created this world and are dead and buried will turn in their graves.

[Kulik] In one of your recent speeches you also said very emotionally that the fatherland is in danger. And following these words, I know people in the Ukraine who say that perhaps this is stereotyped thinking, as this phrase has always been followed by tanks and soldiers. And my feeling is that instead of anxiety for the fatherland, we should have anxiety for our own family, for our own neighbors and people, and for a peaceful life. You see, what was heard in this was a threat, not just alarm, but a threat, as well. I would like you to dispel that, Mikhail Sergeyevich.

[Gorbachev] The fatherland is indeed in danger, but when I spoke of this, addressing deputies, I said I was using this expression consciously, naturally, you understand that all this was done consciously, and this was the danger I had in mind, this danger, and I believe that we should tackle them on the path of this new commonwealth of our peoples and states.

[Kulik] In saying that the fatherland is in danger, we can be certain today that there will be no tanks.

[Gorbachev] All the tanks are in the Ukraine! [Laughter from Kulik]. As long as you don't move off and attack! No, you understand, I can see the political conversation here, and then, you know, when these dangers develop...After all, they are finding them, they have already found missiles in Nagorno-Karabakh. And now they have established that somewhere in the Baltics they are selling missiles and they are going down to the south.

[Kulik] And some people are purchasing Stingers.

[Gorbachev] You understand. Therefore to predict what will happen if the process develops sharply and in an unstable fashion and leads to such clashes, of course it would then be very complicated. And it has to be said that this could provoke certain forces in the Army, too. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction there as well. But I have to say that at this difficult time we must also show particular concern for the Army. It is going through a very difficult period. We must show concern for the officers, we must remember this and remember that these are the people with the guns, with the weapons—we mustn't forget that.

There are some people, you understand, who are playing this Army card or who are simply inciting things. How else can one explain the behavior of the authorities in the Baltic Republics when they immediately say: Occupiers go home! Listen—in the first place, where are they to go? And then how are they to go away?

[Kulik] We don't have that here in the Ukraine. We don't.

[Gorbachev] If one is to say it, the putsch wrecked altogether the process of the acquisition of independence by the Baltics, but the process was to have continued. On 20 August we would have signed the Union treaty. It would have been signed by those republics that wanted to while those who remained outside it, well the treaty contained an article saying that talks begin and agreements are concluded. And that is how the whole set of issues would have gone, this process with the Baltics, we would have talked about citizens, we would have talked about the economy, we would have talked about borders and territories, about defense, about the navy, about everything. About everything.

[Kulik] About everything.

[Gorbachev] About everything.

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, one more question. You repeat very often the phrase: I cannot conceive of the Union without the Ukraine. I would like to say, well, the Union has existed for 70 years without Poland and Finland and it is now without the Baltic republics. Why can't it therefore exist without the Ukraine?

[Gorbachev] Totally different realities have come into being during those 70 years. In the first place, the production forces in our country have developed upon the basis of very deep specialization. The cooperation is such that when one factory comes to a halt the whole country is in trouble, the whole country. The Ukraine is linked very closely with everyone in terms of cooperation. Russia is, too. When such dashing statements are heard from Russian platforms, that Russia can do everything, it will shake them all off and get there, well, I have to tell you that it's all bluff. And bluff precisely because this ignores the realities.

No, no, nowhere. We have a common system for electricity generation. We have shared pipelines and communications. And what we have been developing has been for everyone. We developed Tyumen for everyone. And everyone took part assimilating it in just the same way as we developed the steel industry in the Ukraine for everyone. And such was the distribution of labor and investment of resources that was created that it dictates.... [changes thought] And the cooperation that we have in our country is at a higher level than the EEC. It is higher. How can one tear up all of this? I, therefore, in this sense—given that this cooperation is essential, not to mention the human issues [words indistinct].

Ukrainians will begin asking their politicians this question, and they will ask Russian politicians here this question: What about these five or seven million Ukrainians beyond the borders? What about them? What is their destiny? For they are citizens of another state. You understand what this evokes in human terms. Who needs this, I ask. The person who is now been carried away by it all, who has felt himself to be a great politician, that without him—No! There will be even more learned politicians. Now the democrat is [word indistinct]. We will not overstate our role on this earth. And that is all. It will happen. We must not play easy and reckless games with things like the state, the people, the Union, defense, security, peace. And everyone wants—in the West they want—the Union to be preserved. The whole of the Third World, the developing countries, want it. Everyone wants it. Are we the only ones then? Have we lost our heads? No. I think this will pass.

But the main thing is this: I am talking with such conviction because I simply feel this. I went to Irkutsk. How difficult it was to conduct a conversation with people there. How correctly and how sharply they raised many questions, they put forward demands; the situation is very critical, very. But I saw in the first place how much they want and how much they sympathize with the president and the burden he carries. I heard this simply in human terms; I perceived it and I thanked the Siberians for it. But the first thing they raised was the Union. The Union. Then to Kyrgyzstan, a prosperous tranquil republic, everything more or less all right, even industry is increasing, everything. But they have been reached by the flare-up of these interethnic skirmishes and struggles and death—there was that clash on their frontiers—and like everyone, you know, they said Mikhail Sergeyevich, the Union. The main thing. The Union—the one topic. You go to a factory. It cannot work because the Union is not working. It has been torn apart.

I am confident, therefore, that the fact that I hold this kind of position is what we need and it is in keeping with the mood of the people. I do not know—surely we are not the kind of people who commit suicide?

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, I should like to move away a little from politics, if I may take this opportunity. A great deal is being said in the Ukraine about the roots of the Gorbachev family, Ukrainian roots. Could you confirm or deny this, or simply speak about it.

[Gorbachev] I have already said it, somewhere, in the heat of the moment. Here I am, sitting before you. My roots on my father's side—on my mother's and her father's side, that is, (Panteley Yefimovich Gopkalo), from Chernigov province, from Chernigov soil, and on the side of my father and his father, Andrey Moiseyevich, the roots are in Voronezh. So, am I supposed to separate myself from myself, or calculate which side predominates in me? Well, that's controversial, but in general, the Northern Caucasus was, after all, assimilated by Russians and Ukrainians.

[Kulik] Russians and Ukrainians. I myself love...

[Gorbachev] Yes, and in fact it was there, yes, I grew up there. I sang Ukrainian songs in my childhood. As for the language, I would not say that I could pass for a Ukrainian, but nevertheless, when I am visiting the Ukraine, apart from the literary language—I don't understand everything in that—but I understand everything in everyday language. And my mother sang plenty of Ukrainian songs in her youth, and I myself love Ukrainian literature. The language is very beautiful. You see, a translation of Shevchenko may sound very beautiful in Russian [recites a short piece of poetry in Russian]. It sounds good. But [recites original Ukrainian]—you understand, everything is good in the translation, but when you know both languages, you can sense that there are both gains and losses.

[Kulik] Mikhail Sergeyevich, in connection with this, one of the important factors why the people voted for sovereignty was to avoid losing their language, their culture, their songs. Putting it frankly, very often the language has been left in the countryside and in songs.

[Gorbachev] This is something that I welcome. And I recall when the Belorussians addressed a letter to me, 25 outstanding cultural figures, saying that the Belorussian language was perishing, I took up a staunch defense and insisted that this be reflected in documents, in decisions of state bodies. As I said once in a conversation, people are God's creation and nobody has the right to deprive them of their language, their outlook, and their features, all the less so the great Ukrainian people and their language, a beautiful language. Whatever it may be like, it is the people's language. A people cannot be dumb, all the less so such a people.

So, for that reason, [changes thought] but that is actually dealt within the framework of the new Union and under the present process of establishment of sovereignty. It is all set up more or less as it should be. But this should not end up with fighting in the Ukraine against the Russian language. That is already happening, and don't shake your head. Don't shake your head, because we have established that we are talking about my roots as well as yours, so I have a right, as it were, to say this. And do you know another thing. At my side I have Raisa Maksimovna. Her father Maksim Andreyevich Titorenko left the Chernigov area around 1929 when life was getting difficult there and moved to Siberia to work. That was where he met her mother, (Aleksandra Petrovna Porada). They got married in Veseloyarsk and started a family and that's how they are living, or rather, lived—her father is now dead, he was 79.

So the Chernigov area was the home ground of Maksim Andreyevich and relatives of his are still living there. But not long ago it came to light that although her mother was a Siberian, born in Siberia, nevertheless her parents too had come from Ukraine. (Petr Stepanovich Porada) was born in 1879 in Poltava governorship, Luben uyezd [old term for administrative area, equivalent to rayon], Volochkovskaya volost [old term for small administrative area], in the village of Berezotocha. [Moscow TV adds: "In other words there are some birch trees. Or at least there were some in those days, I don't know whether there are any now."] So you see, both on my mother's side—on her mother's side, Raisa Maksimovna's roots are in the Ukraine, and her maternal grandmother was also Ukr... er ... from Kharkov. So there you have Raisa Maksimovna.

[Kulik] The former territory of the renowned Lutenskiy Cossack Regiment.

[Gorbachev] Quite so. So you see, when we talk about us, this means you and us. I therefore do have some right to argue, on moral or human grounds, to address these good words from my heart and from my soul to the whole of the Ukraine, to all the peoples of the Ukraine, for them to think it all over. I believe we should all be together, as we have always been in creating this 1,000 year-old world, in deciding to ennoble it, to rid ourselves of what had been oppressing people and hampering the revival of each people, each statehood. Yes, I am in favor of this, and will do all in my power for it to be so. But if we go down the road of a split, breaking all this across our knee, this will be a big mistake, a big mistake. I think that they will listen to us, and that something... I hope that they will think everything over again.

I take as my starting point the notion that apart from some bad politicans, in the heads of healthy-minded people, everything is OK. I also count myself among the healthy-minded ones, the sensible ones. This idea is understandable, what I have been arguing in our conversation today, and I very much hope that the Ukraine will play its irreplaceable role in the construction of a new union.

[Kulik] I thank you sincerely, Mikhail Sergeyevich, I have been pleasantly surprised that you have devoted so much attention to our group and to Ukrainian TV. Once again, a huge, human thank you.

[Gorbachev] Good. Thank you for the initiative, and I say goodbye to the viewers. I am saying goodbye for this interview, but I will be addressing them more than once again, with arguments in favor of avoiding a mistake at this very important stage of development of our common destiny and history.

[Kulik] Thank you again.

Spokesman Denies Gorbachev Resignation Rumors

Actions Not 'Faits Accomplis'

LD0912165991 Hamburg DPA in German 1632 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow (DPA)—According to information from his press office, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev is not considering resigning. Rumors about a resignation by the president because of the agreement by the three Slav republics "absolutely do not correspond with the facts", Aleksandr Likhotal told the RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY today.

Yesterday the leaders of the Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus decided to end the existence of the Soviet Union and establish a loose confederation.

According to Likhotal, Gorbachev denies that Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kravchuk, the presidents of Russia and the Ukraine respectively, and Belarussian Parliament Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich have any mandate at all from their peoples and parliaments to sign such agreements. Hence Gorbachev views their actions as declarations of intent and not as faits accomplis.

Following his talks with Yeltsin and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Soviet president is also consulting with other republic leaders on the new situation. Likhotal said that a television address by Gorbachev is possible this evening.

Meanwhile Yeltsin has announced that he will speak about the Minsk agreement in the Russian parliament on 12 December. This was stated by a spokesman for the Congress of People's Deputies.

Resignation 'Possible'

LD1012132191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1250 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Budris and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 10 Dec (TASS)—The departure of a personality like Mikhail Gorbachev from the political scene can only be useful to antidemocratic forces. This thought was emphasized today by USSR presidential aide Georgiy Shakhnazarov when he addressed participants in the Congress of Young Political Leaders, which is in its second day in Moscow.

Defining his stance, Shakhnazarov said that if the decisions made in Minsk are implemented, then "Union bodies will have to wind themselves up. In other words, a situation is taking shape in which the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev and his 'team' is possible. [no closing quotation mark as received]

Alksnis, Bogomolov on Future of USSR

AU0912214491 Vienna Oesterreich Eins Radio Network in German 1720 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Report by Raul Kirschbichler on interview with Soviet People's Deputy Colonel Viktor Alksnis and "Yeltsin adviser" Oleg Bogomolov; place and date not given; Alksnis speaks in Russian with superimposed German translation, and Bogomolov speaks in German—Alksnis, Bogomolov remarks recorded]

[Excerpts] [Kirschbichler] It was four months ago that Boris Yeltsin climbed on the tank near the Russian Parliament. [passage omitted] Viktor Alksnis is skeptical about Boris Yeltsin and his reform plans.

[Alksnis] These reforms cannot be implemented by any one person, only through a strong power. As long as Yeltsin or Gorbachev are in power, this is impossible. The current efforts and attempts by the regional leaders in the republics are not yielding any results as far as a solution to our problems is concerned. The economic situation is not improving in any of the republics. Things will even deteriorate further everywhere. There is no light at the end of the tunnel. If you think that Yeltsin is able now to carry out his reforms, then you are wrong. The republics will flood Russia with millions of rubles. To prevent it, Yeltsin will have to distance himself from these republics and thus destroy the joint economic area.

[Kirschbichler] Economic experts close to the Russian president believe that the destruction of the old structures offers the opportunity to set up new economic relations between the republics. Privatization of the enterprises is intended to offer the individual producers in the republics more economic freedom.

[Alksnis] No, that does not work. Today there is no freedom for the producers, only freedom for the bureaucrats. They are fighting for power today. Until 19 August it was a fight between the bureaucrats of the Union and those of the republics. After 19 August, the bureaucracy of the Union was destroyed, and now we are faced with fighting between the bureaucrats in the various republics. The current economic structures continue to be totalitarian and centralist. [passage omitted]

Therefore, what we need is "shock therapy." For example, if Lithuanian President Landsbergis is convinced that one can be a member both of the United Nations and a Soviet Union, and if his policy of isolation destroys the economic structures, then he will have to resign, and other politicians will replace him. These will further promote economic integration of the Union and subsequently even bring about political integration. Unfortunately, Mr. Landsbergis does not understand that today. He prefers the motto Poor But Free, and refuses, as the other Baltic republics do, to sign an agreement on economic union. [passage omitted]

[Bogomolov] In each country, all sectors of the economy are closely interconnected and have to cooperate. I think it is possible to set up direct relations between enterprises. It is difficult but possible. If all enterprises have to work in an environment of competition and cannot rely on state subsidies, they themselves will determine the best way of cooperation with other enterprises. [passage omitted]

I think what is most important is the stabilization of our currency. Without currency you cannot have a market economy. The currency in the former Soviet Union has been completely destroyed. The center prints money, covers all the spending, finances the Army, pays the ministries, etc., and prices are soaring. [passage omitted] The economy is very monopolized, corrupted, in particular the retail trade, where the mafia is in control. The prices will increase even more. We have to make preparations. Time is short, so we have to make preparations.

[Kirschbichler] Whoever talks to the people waiting in the lines in front of empty food stores knows that time is short. Not only in Moscow but in other major cities, the people's hopes threaten to turn into dissatisfaction. What other forces might stop the democrats?

[Alksnis] First the republics, and second the people. Why should the people agree to a deteriorating standard of living, which is already very low? The people do not believe that things will be better in six months or a year. This is why the deterioration of their social situation will lead to a social eruption, to a social explosion. Taking into account the democratic tendencies, the population of Moscow will understand Yeltsin's plans, but in rural areas it is impossible to set the people's minds at rest.

[Kirschbichler] Does social explosion mean social revolution?

[Alksnis] Yes, and maybe it is inevitable even now. This explosion and the shock therapy cannot be avoided by Yeltsin, Gorbachev, or anyone. This kind of shock therapy should not constitute a transition period, but show how deep the hole is into which we have fallen. Nevertheless, it is hard to say who will come after that explosion. Gorbachev's economic adviser, Silayev, expects the revolution, the explosion, next March, while the sixth department of the state security service, that is the economic department, predicts that the revolution will take place next September.

[Kirschbichler] What does Bogomolov think about the danger of another coup?

[Bogomolov] I think that another coup is impossible. The Army is not ready for it, not determined enough. I would rule it out. Yeltsin counts on the confidence and the support of the Russian people, and the people are aware that they have to make sacrifices. The question is how great will these sacrifices have to be.

[Kirschbichler] Gorbachev's future depends on how close the various republics want to cooperate and in what areas. If these areas were to be placed under the control of supra-regional bodies, then Gorbachev's task might go beyond his current function as a representative figure for the West. What areas should continue to be controlled by Moscow?

[Bogomolov] I think that we need single control over strategic arms, joint institutions in connection with ecology and the environment, for the struggle against crime and terrorism, etc. I think that certain joint institutions will continue to exist. I think that we will also continue to have a kind of parliament because many conflicts between the republics and independent states will emerge, and joint institutions may work as mediators. Maybe it will be possible to control these joint institutions collectively by a parliament or other collective bodies. Maybe another personality will emerge that enjoys more respect than Gorbachev. Gorbachev's time may be over. Maybe Gorbachev remains as a president over the nuclear forces in our country.

[Kirschbichler] A total of 30,000 nuclear warheads are spread all over the territory of the former USSR. Yeltsin has set the goal of concentrating all nuclear arms on Russian territory—a difficult task, considering that the former great Soviet Army has now lost its orientation.

[Alksnis] Today the Soviet Army is in a complicated situation. Since the 19 August events it is demoralized. The politicians divide it up according to nationalities. Nevertheless, the Army and its nuclear potential remain the only thing keeping the USSR together somehow, when many people are saying that it has already disintegrated. I remember that one and a half years ago I was laughed at by American journalists when I warned against dividing up the nuclear potential. I would like to see their faces now. President Bush is even prepared to remove all tactical arms to avoid these arms falling into the hands of the republics. Of course, the Ukraine has a great interest in its nuclear potential because President Kravchuk knows that this is the only chance of keeping Russia at bay. The Ukraine will do anything to guarantee its access to the nuclear codes. The fate of Ukrainian sovereignty depends on its access to the nuclear button. If the Ukraine has this access, the West will have to recognize the Ukraine. It is impossible to predict the future of our nuclear weapons today. I talked to a commander of a submarine equipped with nuclear arms. He told me that he would immediately carry out the maximum nuclear strike possible if anyone should try to put our nuclear weapons under international control. He will not wait for an order from Moscow, he said. The current Soviet Union constitutes a greater danger for the West than before. I do not rule out that from a peaceful period we could move toward a period of war. A civil war in the USSR would lead to a third world war. I am sorry for those people in the West who are now applauding the decline of the last empire. We will not perish easily. If our state truly collapses it will take the whole world with it into the grave.

[Kirschbichler] Trying to outline a peaceful solution leads to the question of what the political entity of the former USSR will look like once all independence movements have reached their objectives. Professor Oleg Bogomolov perceives, first of all, interregional economic cooperation.

[Bogomolov] In my opinion all republics must first enjoy their freedom and independence before they understand the possibilities of economic cooperation. First freedom, then understanding, cooperation, and integration.

Professional Diplomats Likely To Go to Baltics

OW0612213791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1737 GMT 6 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A change of leaders is being considered now for the delegations conducting negotiations with the Baltic countries, according to a high-ranking official of the USSR Foreign Ministry. In a talk with our DP correspondent he said that professional diplomats are likely to replace in this function Eduard Shevardnadze (for Lithuania), Alexander Yakovlev (for Latvia), and Anatoliy Sobchak (for Estonia). This will be in keeping with the usual international practice.

To the question on the reasons for the replacement the diplomat replied that the present delegation leaders are prominent politicians "overloaded with other duties". He explained that the Soviet Union is undergoing such a complicated period when all the major political leaders are involved one way or another in shaping the country's destinies. "In these conditions they have to give up minor lines of their activities which might interfere with the main causes".

The diplomat cautions against overdramatizing the replacement of the delegation leaders should that come about if that lowers slightly the level of Soviet representation, that need not mean a reassessment of the talks' importance or change in relations with the Baltic countries.

Council Meeting Postponed Due to Brest Meeting

OW0912162291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The meeting which opened Monday [9 December] morning of the Council of Heads of State of the Sovereign Republics on the issue of the extraordinary Union budget for the fourth quarter of 1991 was postponed until 18:00. The decision to put off the meeting was taken after the Russian representative to the Interstate Economic Committee, Vladimir Mashits, spoke on the dubious legality of the decisions passed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the budget. According to Mashits, the meeting in Brest among the leaders of Russia, Belorussia and the Ukraine over the weekend have changed the situation. Mashits noted that the decision to form a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) cancels the Treaty of 1922 on the Union, which was founded by these three republics.

"All at once," Mashits emphasized, "the Soviet Union has ceased to exist since yesterday and the issue of an extraordinary Union budget takes on a new slant."

According to the Russian representative, members of the liquidation committee of the Soviet Ministry of

Finances and representatives from the Russian Ministry of Economics and Finances should by this evening "have discussed technical details and legal issues in determining which of the Union budget's emissions go to other republics."

With regard to Russia, Belorussia and the Ukraine, according to Mashits this problem will be solved "without a doubt." Regarding financing of union enterprises in other republics, including wage payments, in his opinion "these problems can be decided."

Answering an "IF" [INTERFAX] correspondent's question on the future Interstate Economic Committee and the Treaty on Economic Cooperation, Mashits said that the Economic Committee's jurisdiction has not yet been formed, since the Treaty on Economic Cooperation has not been ratified.

In response to a question by journalists on the organs of the CIS, Hashits said that "their institutional form will be decided on in the future." In addition to this, he expressed doubt that those entering the commonwealth of states would give the CIS organs significant executive or distributional functions, suggesting in particular that the position of prime minister would not be introduced. "At the moment purely coordinating functions are being proposed," Hashits said.

He did not rule out the possibility that in response to the creation of the CIS, a union of central Asian republics of the former USSR could be established.

States Receive Soviet External Debt Shares

OW0712190991 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1700 GMT 7 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ivan Silayev, head of the Inter-Republican Economic Committee (IREC) and prime minister of the new community of sovereign republics, has said that a statement on the division of the country's external debt, signed by the council of twelve republican premiers, determines the debt shares of the three Baltic states, too. Addressing a press briefing in Moscow Saturday [7 December], he said appropriate documents had already been sent to the Baltic region.

Asked by IF [INTERFAX] whether the Baltic republics had agreed in principle to pay their shares of the Soviet Union's debt, Mr. Silayev replied in the affirmative but noted that there were differences in the choice of methods of debt calculation. He expressed confidence that a mutually acceptable solution would be found in the end.

According to I. Silayev, the republican heads of state had approved the Russian Federation's program of reforms but expressed concern over the fact that the republics found themselves in different starting conditions. The community premier suggested that the republics should free prices simultaneously with Russia. He observed that a 10-15 delay [as received] would not matter much, whereas a pause continuing for a month or more "might sweep the shops outside Russia off the face of the earth."

Mr. Silayev indicated that the republics had not yet opened debates over the formation of a banking union.

He expressed the hope that all the ex-Soviet republics—and possibly some states that had never belonged to the Soviet Union—would eventually join the new community whose economic efficiency would sooner or later become evident.

According to I. Silayev, even if no political union was formed after all, an Economic Union would still be necessary, since it would remove a variety of economic and social problems from the agenda. The premier emphasised that it was his personal view.

Mr. Silayev denied the existence of confrontational attitudes between Russia and the IREC. "As a servicing body, we cannot be expected to wage any kind of war with Russia," he said.

Commenting on the Ukraine's demand for the division of the country's diamond reserve, I. Silayev said the Premiers' Council had decided to check the reserve's contents first, for which purpose a working group involving Russian, Ukrainian, Kazakh and Belorussian representatives had been set up. Other republics were invited to send their own representatives to the group. "Only after we've agreed on how to divide the diamond reserve can we hope to do it fairly," Silayev observed.

The republican premiers will resume debates Monday [9 December].

Official on 'Worsening' Human Rights Situation

OW0712004891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0004 GMT 7 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The chief of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Department for International Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights, Yuriy Reshetov, has said that the past few months have seen a serious worsening of the human rights situation in the Soviet Union. Reshetov was speaking at a news conference on the occasion of International Human Rights Day. Reshetov blamed the aggravation of inter-ethnic conflicts, shortages, the falling standard of living and what he described as "ideological persecution."

Reshetov announced that President Mikhail Gorbachev had formed a special ground under the prominent human rights activist Sergey Kovalev to inquire into the cases of "refuseniks"—people denied permission to go abroad on the excuse they had access to state secrets. The group has established contacts with the USSR Defense Ministry. Some of the reasons for which permission to go abroad had been denied proved unconvincing. Reshetov said in his view no person can be denied permission to go abroad for no more than five years irrespective of his or her previous job. He recalled that that was the internationally accepted standard. The emigration/immigration law passed by the previous USSR Supreme Soviet is being reconsidered along these lines. Besides, the laws on the KGB, on the police and some others will have to be amended too.

Reshetov added that the group was also studying the cases of those political prisoners, who have not been released yet.

Bakatin Remark on Helicopter Crash Denied

LD0612212391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1803 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 6 Dec (TASS)—Reports about an interview given by Vadim Bakatin, the leader of the Interrepublican Security Service (ISS) about the causes of the accident and the deaths of passengers on the "MI-8" helicopter, and the comments attributed to him regarding this matter are a crude invention. This is claimed in a statement circulated here today by the ISS public relations center. It was issued in connection with the fact that recent reports have appeared in a number of media publications about a supposed interview with Vadim Bakatin. In it, he purportedly claimed that on board the "MI-8" helicopter that crashed in Nagorno-Karabakh on 20 November, there were bullet holes from shots seemingly fired from inside the aircraft.

Now careful investigation of all the circumstances of the air disaster is continuing, and definitive conclusions can be drawn only after the necessary technical and criminal investigation experts have completed their work, the ISS public relations center reports.

TASS Carries TV News Review for 8 Dec

LD0912081891 Moscow TASS in English 0422 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 8 TASS—The first results of the two-day meeting of the leaders of three Slavic republics of the former USSR—Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine, as well as today's presidential elections in a number of republics featured prominently in the television news shows offered by Russian and Central Soviet Television on Sunday afternoon [8 December].

Boris Yeltsin, Stanislav Shushkevich and Leonid Kravchuk signed three final documents prepared during their meeting behind closed doors in Belarus, both television news shows—Vesti and Inform-TV—said. One of the documents they signed was an agreement to found a commonwealth of independent states.

"We are close to the limit behind which anarchy and chaos begin," Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in an interview with Ukrainian Television, a fragment of which was shown on the Inform-TV news show.

"Gorbachev said he saw his duty in averting the disintegration of the single united state and ensuring its revival on the basis of new principles.

Gorbachev made it clear that if the presidential post is established in the new Union, he will probably not run for the post.

The State Council is due to meet in Moscow on Monday [9 December] to discuss the future of the Union, Vesti reported. "The republics must stop scaring the world and agree at least about a military and political union. Strategic weapons "should be kept in one place," President Nursultan Nazarbayev said in an interview with Vesti and Inform-TV upon his arrival in Moscow on Sunday [8 December].

The leaders of the central republican banks have failed to agree on establishing a banking union of sovereign states, Vesti reported.

The need for such union is obvious, but political concerns are prevailing over economic common sense, the Vesti host commented.

The problem is which principle to choose to solve the most important problems of the finance and credit policy. Either one republic—one vote, or a weightier vote to a weightier republic, USSR Gosbank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko said in an interview with Vesti.

Most republics favour the first version, but Russia is against. According to Gerashchenko, difficulties are bound to crop up in the first half of the next year, because the republican budgets are being formed with deficit. The republican banks will have to make the deficit good, and if there is no coordination, the central bank of one of the republics will be able to flood the entire territoy of the Union with a mass of worthless money.

The presidential elections in Moldova on Sunday [8 December] have been completed. By midday, more than 60 per cent of eligible voters had gone to the polls. The leader of the republic, Mircea Snegur, ran unopposed, and had every chance of winning, according to Vesti.

Snegur announced today that as soon as he took office, he would begin radical economic reforms. But voting, although brisk on the whole, was taking place in a very tense atmosphere, amid calls for boycotting the elections, coming from the Transdniester territory and the Soviet Army, Vesti reported.

Four candidates contested the post of the president of Chuvashia in Sunday [8 December] voting, in which the heads of local administration were also elected.

By 16:00, about 52 per cent of eligible voters had cast their ballots in the election, Inform-TV reported.

Three candidates contested presidency in the Republic of Mari-El [as received] today.

Inform-TV reported on today's developments in regions of heightened tension. A congress of Russian-speaking inhabitants was held in the republic of Karachayevo-Cherkess.

Tension persists on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, where Armenian militants attacked a village and took women and children hostages.

Railway traffic has been at a standstill for the second consecutive day on a stretch of the North-Caucasian railway, where several railwaymen have been taken hostage.

Latvia and Armenia have signed an inter-government agreement on principles of trade and economic cooperation for 1992-1995, Vesti said.

An energy crisis is acute in Kyrgyzstan, Inform-TV said, following the failure by other republics to supply about 300,000 tonnes of oil products. In Tajikistan, supplies of electricity to enterprises have been cut by 15 per cent, and half the street lights have had to be turned off.

The 50,000-strong Democratic Party of Russia had held its third congress, at which it decided to withdraw from the Democratic Russia Movement, Vesti reported.

The Democratic Party of Russia is sponsored by entrepreneurs, who have infused about four billion roubles into it since the party was founded.

TV Evening News Review 9 Dec

LD0912235391 Moscow TASS in English 2308 GMT 9 Dec 91

["Review of Soviet TV Evening News"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 10 TASS—Soviet TV evening news programmes on Monday [9 December] gave much air time to the controversial reaction in the world to the agreement between Russia, the Ukraine and Belorussia signed in Minsk on Sunday [8 December].

Inform TV quoted Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's statement on the occasion. "The fate of a multinational state cannot be determined by a decision of only three of its republics. A solution must be sought by taking the will of all the Soviet sovereign republics into consideration".

The news programmes reported of a meeting between Gorbachev, Russian President Boris Yeltsin and president of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, in the Kremlin. Vesti TV news programme host said neither Leonid Kravchuk of the Ukraine nor Stanislav Shushkevich of Belorussia arrived in Moscow, thus ruling out any discussion.

The evening news programmes paid much attention to the confused reaction of Nazarbayev to the initiative of the three Slav states' leaders and quoted him as saying "the agreement is no more than one of the possible unity treaties". Nazarbayev opposes the decision to shift the centre of the new commonwealth to Minsk and abandoning the Soviet central structures. He was positively offended the three leaders did not consult him on the agreement. According to an Inform TV correspondent, Nazarbayev is hesitant to join the treaty without having consulted his Islamic neighbours first. "Developments are so fast", Nazarbayev said, "but we must find a realistic approach and find a civilized way out".

Vesti quoted Kravchuk as saying at a news conference in Kiev "the agreement of the three was adopted unanimously".

Inform TV produced a fragment of a news conference in Minsk where Shushkevich said he acted "in the interests of Belorussia and its people".

Both news programmes showed Russian Deputy Prime Minister Gennadiy Burbulis who said the treaty was "the only possible solution to the crisis, it would lead us out of a dead end and launch constructive work".

Vladimir Zhirinovsky, head of the Liberal Democratic Party accused the three leaders of "monstrous treachery".

Nikolay Travkin's Russian Democratic Party supported the idea of Gorbachev's Union treaty. The party has taken a decision to hold a rally on Tuesday [10 December] against disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Russian state adviser Sergey Shakhray is of an opinion the three states have made the best decision possible by signing the treaty.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev noted with satisfaction that the reaction of the Western diplomats was positive.

Military

New Chief of General Staff Samsonov Profiled

LD0912141891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1105 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)— Fifty year old Colonel-General Viktor Samsonov, who was appointed by USSR presidential decree at the end of last week to be chief of general staff of the country's armed forces, is one of the youngest generals to have ever headed this department.

He has replaced in this post fifty-six year old Army General Vladimir Lobov who occupied this post from August to December 1991.

The service record of Viktor Samsonov is absolutely typical for an officer progressing quickly in the service. He graduated from the Far East Higher All-Arms Command School in 1964, then he further raised his professional qualifications at the "Frunze" Academy and the

Academy of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces. Over the last five years he has replaced one high command post for another even higher one: he has gone from being chief of staff for the Trans-Caucasian Military District to commander of the forces of the Leningrad Military District. In August 1991 the actions of the command of the military district during the putsch was positively noted by Anatoliy Sobchak, the mayor of the city, and by Yuriy Yarov, the chairman of the oblast soviet, although a number of Leningrad city soviet deputies held a diametrically opposed view on this.

In an interview with a TASS correspondent in October, the commander stated: "The facts bear witness for themselves: the state of emergency regime was not established in the city, and armed formations did not enter the city. Thanks to this, it was possible to avoid any possible bloodshed."

Lobov Removed Over Disagreements on Reform

LD0912220691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1800 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 9 December (TASS)—The removal of Vladimir Lobov from the post of chief of General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces was caused by the fact that his "ideas on how the armed forces should be reformed do not coincide with the direction which has today received the backing of the State Council and the country's leadership." So says today's IZVESTIYA, citing unnamed "military experts."

As has already been reported, on 7 December the USSR president removed 56 year-old Army General Lobov and appointed 50 year-old Colonel General Viktor Samsonov, commander of the troops of Leningrad Military District, to this post. Such a rapid change at this high level—Lobov became chief of the General Staff immediately after the failed coup attempt of 19-21 August—prompted the newspaper to seek clarification from the USSR Ministry of Defense. An IZVESTIYA correspondent was told by the ministry that the measure was taken "in the interests of accelerating reform in the army".

The newspaper recalls that the new chief of General Staff came to prominence during the August coup when "he refused to obey instructions from the State Committee for the State of Emergency and decided not to put soldiers and military equipment in the streets of Leningrad."

General Staff Reportedly To Relieve Leaders

AU1012125491 Cologne Deutschlandfunk Network in German 1200 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] The Soviet Army General Staff has been meeting in Moscow today under the chairmanship of Soviet Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov. No details were officially reported on the topics of the meeting.

According to the independent news agency, NEGA [expansion unknown], more Soviet Army leaders will be relieved of their posts following the removal from office of former chief of staff, General Lobov. These changes reportedly also have been coordinated with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin will meet with the military district commanders tomorrow, 11 December.

Navy Aides on Mediterranean Squadron Future

PM0912163991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 6 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Interview with Rear Admiral I. Semenov, deputy chief of a Navy Main Staff directorate, and Captain First Rank N. Cherey, chief of a Navy Main Staff sector, by Captain Third Rank V. Maryukha; date and place not given: "Soviet Ships To Leave Mediterranean? As Usual, Rumors Proved Slightly Exaggerated"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] For a long time now the mass media have been discussing questions of the possible transfer of Navy ships from bases on the territory of the proclaimed sovereign republics to Russian ports. It is now the turn of the Navy's operational elements [operativnyye formirovaniya]—our Black Sea Fleet correspondent reported the alleged preparations to axe the Mediterranean squadron (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA 3 December this year). The editorial office asked the Navy Main Staff for clarifications, and our correspondent talked to Rear Admiral I. Semenov, deputy chief of s directorate, and Captain First Rank N. Cherey, chief of a sector.

[Maryukha] Ivan Aleksandrovich, what is the nature of the task group [operativnoye soyedineniye] in the Mediterranean today and can it be said that it will be abolished shortly?

[Semenov] Our ships have been on combat service in the Mediterranean for more than 20 years. This was brought about by the presence of the U.S. 6th Fleet battle group [udarnaya gruppirovka] there. At various times the squadron numbered dozens of warships, whose number fluctuated depending on the tasks they were performing. The composition of this squadron was never permanent and, especially of late, the number of ships under its command has constantly dropped. This was due both to the "thaw" in international relations and to some extent to our economic difficulties. But this does not at all mean that the cutbacks in the fleet and our economic difficulties, even in view of the shortage of foreign currency to pay the crews, will inevitably entail the elimination of the Mediterranean squadron today.

[Cherey] Some of the squadron's ships are actually not in the Mediterranean but in the Black Sea. But it must be realized that it is only a matter of a day's transfer to the destination points and ships and crews need rest, technical servicing.... And this is just part of the squadron. It has under its command ships commuting between fleets [sovershayushchiye mezhflotskiye perekhody], along with hydrographic and auxiliary ships that have spent a long time in the Mediterranean. So, no one has abolished the squadron.

[Maryukha] So, are there possibly some plans enabling us to say that the Mediterranean squadron will be cut back and then eliminated?

[Cherey] The political situation in the region is making it possible to reduce the numerical strength of the squadron's ships. This will also occur due to cutbacks in the Navy as a whole. But the question of eliminating the squadron is not as yet on the agenda.

[Semenov] Moreover, I would not like to even guess about the future since making forecasts in our time of unpredictable decisions is a thankless task. The absence of political solutions to many issues considerably complicates our service, but this does not mean that we are not trying to settle these issues at our level. For example, the decisions adopted by the authorities that have emerged on the former territory of the Union of Sovereign States, in particular Georgia, naturally affect the effectiveness of the fleet's forces. In our plans we are trying to take the prevailing situation into consideration so as to prevent unplanned, unauthorized actions on both sides. We are trying to resolve all the questions and conflict situations that arise through negotiations. Thus, for example, representatives of Georgian armed formations detained and disarmed an officer in the Zugdidi area, who had been detailed to escort a pay shipment to servicemen. With the assistance of the Poti Prefect's Office, the brigade command succeeded in settling the conflict, but what guarantee is there that something of the sort will not happen again?

[Maryukha] Ivan Aleksandrovich, are we to understand that, by making contact with the new military officials in the sovereign republics, the Navy has recognized Georgia's right to have its own navy?

[Semenov] It is up to politicians whether or not to grant recognition. We are military men and must perform the tasks that we have been set. There have been no claims to Union fleet property from the commander of the Georgian naval forces; according to our information, he himself wants to resolve all problems via talks and condemns any unauthorized attempts to "share out" property.

[Maryukha] Do these contacts presuppose discussion of questions of redeploying ships from Poti?

[Semenov] The fleet has not been confronted with the task of moving the base point from Poti and, naturally, this has not been discussed with anyone. The planned operation to remove ammunition whose storage date had expired—we have no facilities for utilizing it on site—may have been the reason for the rumors about redeployment. No one has given any orders for other property to be removed or for servicemen's families to be evacuated, as happened during the well-known events in Baku. Until a political decision is made, Poti will remain the fleet's base.

Shaposhnikov Moscow Battle Anniversary Order

PM0912125191 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 5 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Order of the USSR Defense Minister No. 560 dated Moscow, 5 December 1991: "On the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Moscow"]

[Text] Comrade soldiers, sailors, sergeants and petty officers, ensigns and warrant officers, officers, generals, and admirals!

Comrade war and labor veterans, participants in the Battle of Moscow!

Five decades separate us from the grim year of 1941, when one of the fiercest battles of the Great Patriotic War unfolded near Moscow. In that battle the courage, steadfastness, and heroism of the Soviet people and the selfless devotion of the sons and daughters of our united multinational motherland were displayed in all their magnitude. Hitler's blitzkrieg plan was buried outside Moscow.

I greet and congratulate you on the 50th anniversary of the start of the victorious offensive by Soviet troops near Moscow, which exploded the myth of the Wehrmacht's invincibility and helped to strengthen the anti-Hitler coalition and boost liberation movements by the enslaved peoples against fascism.

I wish Army and Navy personnel success in their military work and in strengthening military discipline, combat friendship, and comradeship.

I wish war and labor veterans and participants in the Battle of Moscow good health, well-being, and success in young people's patriotic education. To mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle for Moscow I ORDER:

That today, 5 December 1991, a festive firework display be held at 2100 in the capital of our motherland, the hero-city Moscow.

I express the conviction that the exploit of Moscow's defenders will continue to serve as an example for Army and Navy personnel of loyalty to the military oath and to their people.

[Signed] Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov, USSR defense minister

Over 8,000 Servicemen Take Advantage of Amnesty

PM0912123191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Dec 91 p 1

[Report from PRAVDA-TASS-INTERFAX column under the general heading: "Newsbeat"]

[Text] The deadline for servicemen who went absent without leave from their subunits and come under the 1 November Law on the Amnesty to show up at military management organs and their place of service expired yesterday. As of 4 December 8,259 servicemen of those on the wanted list had voluntarily shown up at units. PRAVDA's correspondent was given this figure by the USSR Defense Ministry Information Directorate.

Procedure Set for Selling Military Property

PM1012130991 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Unattributed report: "Decree Issued on Procedure for Selling Property"]

[Text] The USSR president has issued a decree on the procedure for the USSR Defense Ministry's sale of released military-technical property. The decree stipulates that with a view to creating additional resources for resolving servicemen's socioeconomic problems in future before concluding an agreement regulating questions of ownership of the property of the USSR Armed Forces, the USSR Defense Ministry is authorized to sell on a commercial basis the military-technical property that is released, including engineering and other installations.

The funds in Soviet rubles and foreign currency received from the sale of property on the domestic and foreign market will be used to improve the socioconsumer and housing conditions of servicemen and members of their families.

No Interest in Buying GDR Military Equipment

LD0812065191 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2159 GMT 5 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] According to the information from reliable sources, the USSR Defence Ministry does not intend to procure weapons, military equipment and property of former GDR's National Army.

Previously the FRG Defence Ministry informed about the Soviet Union being interested in procuring these things, among other countries, in GDR [sentence as received]. Officials of the USSR Defence Ministry believe that, first of all, the bulk of the weapons of former National Army of GDR has become outmoded and, second, the USSR Defence Ministry has no necessary resources for that.

New Kremlin Commandant Appointed

OW0912193391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] As IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent has learned, on Saturday Colonel Mikhail Barsukov was appointed commandant of the Kremlin. Previously he was in charge of the USSR President's residence.

He replaced Gennadiy Bashkin who had retired.

Poll Reports Views on European Troop Withdrawal

OW0912081991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0733 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] 42% of the participants in the July poll by the National Public Opinion Studies Center (VCIOM) did not agree that the removal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe was premature. 2798 people in a representative survey of the country responded.

30% said that the Soviet Union rushed troop removal.

28% did not give a specific answer.

Margin of error is 3%.

Baltic Affairs

Replacement of Chief Soviet Negotiators Likely

OW0612133691 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1130 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A Soviet Foreign Ministry official has confirmed that the replacement of the chief Soviet negotiators with the Baltic states is currently under discussion. He said that A. Yakovlev, A. Sobchak and E. Shevardnadze would most likely be replaced with professional diplomats in the near future, since "that is the usual practice in the sphere of intergovernmental talks."

Asked about the reasons for the planned replacements, the official said that the current heads of the three Soviet delegations "have their hands full." He said the Soviet Union was going through very hard times, and that all prominent politicians were dealing, in one way or another, with matters determining the nation's future and had to concentrate on their direct duties in order not to harm either of these businesses.

The Foreign Ministry official said there was no need to dramatize the replacements decision, if one was ever to be taken. Even if the level of representation be somewhat lower [passage as received] as a result, it would in no way reduce the degree of importance attached by the Soviet Union to its talks and relations with the Baltic countries.

Estonia

Official Statement on Delay in Union Talks

LD0912205391 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Statement released by the Government of the Republic of Estonia; date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] On 10 November 1991, talks between the Republic of Estonia and the USSR began at Narva-Joesuu, with the final aim of establishing stable and good-neighbourly relations between the two states. The first plenary session of the two delegations determined four main directions in their work, and its was agreed that the results of interim meetings of the corresponding working groups would be discussed at the next plenary session on 8 December this year.

Regrettably, the Government of the Republic of Estonia has to acknowledge that the USSR Government has—unexpectedly—suspended the mandates of its delegation, and for this reason the second plenary session in the talks has been postponed.

The continued unlawful presence of USSR Armed Forces on Estonian territory is of concern to the Government of the Republic of Estonia, as is the fact that several agreements achieved with the USSR Ministry of Defense are being ignored. It cannot be ruled out that in such an ambiguous situation some military units based in the Baltic countries may get out of the control of even the USSR central power.

The Government of the Republic of Estonia expresses serious concern in connection with the delay in the talks. Should this situation continue, it will be forced to approach the international public so as to explain the dangers concerning the situation that has evolved. The Government of the Republic of Estonia hopes that the USSR will implement all necessary measures so that the talks between our states will continue in the very near future.

Sobchak May Be Replaced at Talks With Union

LD0612170891 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1500 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Text] Estonian State Minister Raivo Vare said, in an interview with the ETA agency, that Anatoliy Sobchak, head of the Soviet delegation at the Estonia-USSR talks, will most likely be replaced. It is expected that his place will be taken by a figure with diplomatic status and corresponding experience. In Vare's view, this can substantially influence the course of the talks.

Ruutel Signs Joint Communique With Yeltsin

OW0912215491 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1440 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's President Boris Yeltsin and the head of Estonia' parliament Arnold Ruutel signed a joint communique in Moscow on Monday.

Considering the hard economic situation in both Estonia and Russia, we agreed to try to do our best to implement our trade agreement, Arnold Ruutel told BF's [BALTFAX] correspondent after signing the communique.

According to him, the communique reflects the mutual desire of Russia and Estonia to make gradual transition to international rules of trade and clearing system of settlements.

As for the borders, the two sides agreed that it's necessary to take into account ethnic problems in the border areas. According to A. Ruutel, there is no logic in the borders fixed unilaterally by the Soviet Union. Some corrections will have to be made, he said.

When asked about Soviet troops in Estonia, A. Ruutel said that Estonia is prepared to build housing for the units to be withdrawn at its own expense in Russia. The status of troops in Estonia, their number and withdrawal schedule should be worked out as soon as possible, A. Ruutel added.

Independence of Ukraine Formally Recognized

OW0912213891 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1630 GMT 9 dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia has formally recognized Ukraine's independence. A note sent by the Estonian Foreign Ministry to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry expesses hope for the establishment of close and friendly relations between the two independent states.

Soviets 'Violating' Agreed Military Transfer

OW0912213191 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1150 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an interview given to BF [BALTFAX] the Estonian State Minister, Mr. Raivo Vare, said the USSR was violating the agreement providing for the transfer of the entire civil defence system stationed on Estonian territory, including the weapons and other materiel, to Estonian jurisdiction by November 1, 1991. The agreement was signed by the Estonian Prime Minister, Mr. Edgar Savisaar, and the USSR Defence Minister, Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, in September 1991.

"One is getting the impression that Moscow is not going to give us any of the weapons or military equipment but is only going to leave us the premises of the civil defence divisions," Mr. Vare said. He pointed out that this had been stated by the chief of the USSR civil defence system, Colonel-General Pankov, during a meeting Mr. Vare had with him on December 6.

Mr. Vare also said that an agreement on the transfer of the civil defence administration centre and the premises of the other units (except the Johvi Regiment) had been initialled. But Gen. [General] Pankov said he would not sign it before he had the consent of Marshal Shaposhnikov.

Mr. Vare believes there can be two reasons why the USSR has failed to transfer any of its weapons and military equipment to the Baltic states: "Either they want us to start buying weapons from 'shady' sources, which they could then hold against us, or they are simply trying to put this off as far as possible."

BF has already reported that a civil defence regiment stationed in the town of Johvi in the north-east of Estonia has been withdrawn from Estonia together with all its weapons and equipment which, in accordance with the agreement, were to be transferred to Estonia.

New Controls Introduced at Lithuanian Border

OW0712173391 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1415 GMT 7 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia's Foreign Ministry has notified its opposite number in Lithuania that it introduces new rules of entrance into the republic. Since December 1, all visitors crossing the Estonian border have been required to present their documents. As of January 15 next year, border checkpoints will hand out loose-leaf visas valid for 1 month.

Similar rules will be in effect also for citizens of other ex-Soviet republics.

Bank Leader Says Country in Economic Deadlock

OW0612181391 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1710 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Siim Kallas, head of the Bank of Estonia, told a meeting of industrial plant directors in Tallinn Thursday [5 December] that for technical reasons the republican monetary reform could not be launched until next May.

Mr. Kallas spoke with skepticism about Estonia's present economic situation and prospects for the future. He said the USSR would be unlikely to increase raw material supplies to Estonia, or continue "selling fuel at prices 4 times lower than elsewhere in the world" long enough. According to his estimates, 1 liter of benzine might soon cost up to 35 rubles.

Mr. Kallas denied the government claims that Estonia's budget was well-balanced. He argued that the "hard-currency" part of the budget was calculated on the basis of the official exchange rate of 1.8 rubles for the dollar. "If calculated according to the market rate, the budget would collapse," he observed.

As BF [BALTFAX] has already reported, the Bank of Estonia established the exchange rate as of December 4 at 66.33-70.97 rubles for the dollar.

For the future Estonian currency, the kroon, to be sufficiently strong, the republic should have a stable budget with a deficit of no more than 2-3%, S. Kallas said. He noted that with its current export potential at $270-280 mln [million], and its import spending at $500 mln, Estonia might be in need of $220-230 mln to stabilize its exports.

The Bank of Estonia's president suggested putting education and health care on a commercial basis in the republic, and expanding the sale of land and enterprises for hard currency to western partners. In his view, Estonia should not expect any tangible economic assistance in the near future. Besides, it might be difficult to return the republic's gold, he warned,

Commenting on the Estonian government's economic policy, Mr. Kallas described it as "deadlocked", which he attributed to slow decision-making and the existence of considerable differences on the matter within the government. As a graphic instance of these he cited the already passed law on property reform, whereby the property nationalized in 1940 must be returned to its former owners or their heirs. He complained that "onward movement towards capitalism has been impeded by the fact that the process of returning seized property is too slow and fails to take personal business qualities into account.

Latvia

Food Prices Freed; Import Licenses Issued

OW1012002691 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1945 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] By today's decision of the Latvian Government, food prices will be freed in the republic December 10th.

All previously concluded contracts on shipments are to be annulled December lOth. All Latvian enterprises will freely buy grain, sugar-beet, livestock farming products and linen [as received] produces on republican territory at prices not lower than the state purchase ones. If a manufacturer fails to sell a product at free price, the state will buy it at state purchase price.

Starting from December 10th a governmental commission led by Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis will be issuing licences on food imports from the republic.

Lithuania

Landsbergis Welcomes Minsk Agreement

OW0912220391 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1945 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of the Lithuanian parliament Vytautas Landsbergis has welcomed the document on the creation of the Community of Independent States signed by the leaders of the three Slavonic republics in Brest. At a news conference in Vilnius December 9th Mr. Landsbergis called the treaty "an attempt to preserve stability".

Mr. Landsbergis expressed confidence that the Community of Independent States would become a successor of the USSR. "Lithuania will surely benefit from that, especially in settling the problem of Soviet troops' withdrawal from the Baltics," he stressed. A positive process is going on," he concluded. [quotation marks as received]

Asked by BF's [BALTFAX] correspondent about the possibility of talks with the USSR President, Mr. Landsbergis said: "The three states of the Community, not Gorbachev, will decide everything. I think he is already in the past. Now he can regain power only through a coup."

Newspaper Warns of 'Parliamentary Coup'

OW0612182291 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1710 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The newspaper LAISVA LIETUVA (Free Lithuania) carries an article entitled IN FOR A COUP, which quotes reliable sources as warning that a parliamentary coup may occur in the republic next week. It says that under the existing scenario "it may be announced that in the critical internal political situation, the 1938 Lithuanian Constitution automatically enters into force" turning the Lithuanian Supreme Council into a Sejm, and the Supreme Council Chairman into President of Lithuania without parliamentary voting or general elections.

The newspaper recalls that the latest session of the republican popular movement SAJUDIS, which was attended by the Supreme Council head Vytautas Landsbergis, discussed the range of powers to be delegated to the Lithuanian president and heard Mr. Landsbergis indicating that he would be content to take up the presidential post.

LAISVA LIETUVA publishes a list of 33 district and urban newspapers that have gone on strike in support of freedom of the press.

According to BF's [BALTFAX] Vilnius correspondent, LIETUVOS AIDAS and EKHO LITVY were the only two central newspapers to come off the presses Friday.

Lithuania's rock stars are expected to meet in Vilnius at 6 pm Saturday for a protest show ROCK FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

Latvian Representative on Coup

LD0912181991 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1000 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] In Saturday's issue of DIENA, everyone could read the BNS [BALTIC NEWS SERVICE] agency report on a possible parliamentary coup in Lithuania on Tuesday [10 December]. We, too, were interested in this report. Therefore, this morning we conferred with the Latvian representative office in Vilnius. This is what we were told by Permanent Representative Alberts Sarkans:

[Begin Sarkans recording] In Lithuania, there are various rumors, and it was reported that a president must be introduced as soon as possible, and it is thought that in principle this question could be settled on Tuesday or Wednesday. At the moment it is hard to say—I have to go to the Supreme Council to talk to one or two deputies and examine the situation. In principle, such a possibility exists, but I think the Supreme Council will express an extremely sharp reaction; [there will be] extremely great controversy. So first of all, I must get reacquainted with the situation at this moment at the Supreme Council. [end recording]

Food Supplies To Be Sent to Moscow

OW0912233791 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1440 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "The government of Lithuania will find ways of improving food supplies to Moscow," Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius said on Lithuanian TV. Referring to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's statement that Moscow's food resources would last for only two days, the Lithuanian prime minister said that no one should gloat over this circumstance, and that Lithuania herself should take a due lesson.

He urged the Lithuanian public organizations to show compassion to Russia and to her people "despite the fact that for 50 years the USSR did not recognize Lithuania as a state." He expressed confidence that now Moscow would duly appreciate assistance and support given to it.

Interrepublic Affairs

Reaction to Commonwealth of Independent States

Kozyrev on Gorbachev's Future

AU1012093591 Hamburg BILD in German 9 Dec 91 pp 1-2

[Interview with Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev by Karl-Ludwig Guensche on 9 December; place not given: "Gorby, Everything Is Finished"]

[Text] [Guensche] What will become of Gorbachev now?

[Kozyrev] Since the signing of the treaty last night, all organs of the former union must immediately stop their activities. This also applies to President Gorbachev. We will take over nearly all the experts. Gorbachev does not have a contagious disease, either. We will find a job for him as well.

[Guensche] What will happen if he does not agree?

[Kozyrev] The question is how his remaining power can be handed over to the new "Commonwealth of Independent States." There are two possibilities: This can either be achieved with violence or without violence. We are in favor of a civilized transfer of power to the new alliance—including control of the Army and of the nuclear weapons. This is the subject of talks between Yeltsin and Gorbachev. We rule out a violent development.

[Guensche] Will other republics join the commonwealth of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus?

[Kozyrev] I believe that Armenia and some other republics might join it. It is also open to former East European states like Bulgaria and Romania, for example.

[Guensche] What is the reason for this sudden step?

[Kozyrev] For the international community, the irresponsible Soviet Union had to be replaced by a civilized community of free states that guarantees peace and human rights.

Further on Kozyrev's Comments

LD1012102191 Moscow TASS in English 0931 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 10 TASS—"The new commonwealth will be a much better and more reliable partner to the surrounding world," Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev has told Russian television.

Having referred to the agreement signed by Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to create a commonwealth of independent states as a "historic event," the minister said the new commonwealth may become a way out of the "impasse, the restoration of old structures" and preparation for the signing of a Union treaty has run into. Various drafts of such a treaty were virtually aimed at keeping the old ways, he added.

Yeltsin, Bush Conversation Noted

LD0912164191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1258 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Surzhanskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)—Today Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev informed Soviet and foreign journalists at a news conference about the telephone conversation that took place on 8 December between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. President George Bush. According to the minister, Boris Yeltsin conducted the conversation in the name of the leaders of the three republics—Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus—who made a statement on 8 December about the formation of a commonwealth of independent states. The aim of the conversation, Andrey Kozyrev noted, was to acquaint the U.S. President with the essence of the document signed in Minsk.

In the words of the minister, Boris Yeltsin drew George Bush's attention to the article in the agreement that addresses control over nuclear weapons. The major part of the strategic nuclear arsenal is located on the territory of these three republics. According to the information at Andrey Kozyrev's disposal, the U.S. President's reaction was positive.

Replying to a question from journalists about under whose jurisdiction nuclear weapons will be and who specifically will carry out this control over them, the minister noted that at present the USSR president, the country's Defense Council, and the USSR Ministry of Defense carries out such control. Andrey Kozyrev reminded journalists that the trilateral statement contains guarantees about the fulfillment of international obligations stemming from the treaties and agreements of the former USSR and provides guarantees for single control over nuclear weapons and their nonproliferation.

Burbulis on Minsk Meeting

LD0912213191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 9 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] Today in Moscow, Gennadiy Burbulis, first vice president [as heard] of the Russian Government, and Andrey Kozyrev, the republic's minister of foreign affairs, explained the essence of the documents signed by the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine to Soviet and foreign journalists.

[Begin Burbulis recording, captioned as first vice premier of the Russian Government] At the meeting in Minsk, an attempt was made to look at reality as it is in actual fact, removing the protracted ambiguity and hypocrisy. The juridical and political conviction was unanimously accepted that we are taking the only possible step that will enable us to emerge from this impasse. We managed to agree on a single currency area for the period of economic stabilization and on open borders; in a word, on everything that has tormented, alarmed, and worried both the population and the bodies of executive power over the last six months. [end recording]

Russia Still in Economic Community

OW0912195791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "The formation of the community of independent states does not mean that Russia leaves the economic community," said Sergey Shakhray, state RSFSR counselor for legal policies, in an exclusive interview with IF [INTERFAX]. "Under one clause of the agreement establishing the community, it does not cover the responsibilities of the signatories vis-a-vis third parties," said Mr. Shakhray. Asked whether Russia will respect the economic treaty's clause regarding the formation of a coordinating body, the Interrepublic Economic Committee, he answered that the exiting Committee for the Operational Management of the National Economy is not provided for in the treaty and is an interim structure. "The Interrepublic Economic Committee has yet to be set up and, consequently, it has not started work," emphasized Sergey Shakhray.

Shakhray Interview Reported

LD0912220291

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1938 GMT on 9 December broadcast an interview with Sergey Mikhailovich Shakhray, Russian Federation state counsellor on legal matters, conducted by commentator N. Svanidze.

Svanidze asked what legal grounds the three republics of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine have to state that the Soviet Union no longer exists? Shakhray replied that there is historical justice in the fact that it is precisely the three founding members of the old Union which have declared that it no longer exists. They did not announce its dissolution or liquidation; they merely stated that it does not exist any more. All former Union members have declared independence, Shakhray said. There was no alternative to what was done, other than chaos and division of borders.

Shakhray said that within the new framework it will be possible to ensure peace, independence, and stability, and to protect one's own people against hunger. The new Commonwealth is open to any state, according to Article 12. I am confident, he said, that most former Union members will join the Commonwealth. Certain areas of joint activity must be coordinated: foreign policy, common market, customs, transport and communications, environmental protection, welfare, immigration issues, and the fight against crime.

Shakhray emphasized the importance of joint implementation of radical economic reforms. Prices will be freed as of 1 January. Food aid will be given to the Russian Federation. The ruble remains the main currency, and printing money will be curbed. Budget deficits will be curtailed. Taxation and price policies will be coordinated, as will foreign economic activity and the customs policy. The republics have agreed on defense expenditures and on eliminating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. The principle of open borders has been proclaimed, and the principle of territorial integrity and recognition of state borders within the Commonwealth has been enshrined.

Shakhray continued: "One of the main problems is the Army. Here the republics have agreed on issues of fundamental importance: that they will retain and maintain under joint command the common military-strategic space, including a single source of control over nuclear weapons. There will be no proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Army will not be broken up into ethnic divisions. There will be a single strategic, military-strategic space, a joint command, a single source of control over nuclear weapons."

Answering a question on whether the Army will have its own supreme commander, Shakhray said: "The agreement now states that a special document will settle this, but the commander in chief of the united strategic armed forces, the chief of the general staff of the united strategic armed forces, and the defense council or the security council represent something without which it is impossible to ensure joint command, a single source of control, and stability in this area; this the republics have agreed on. The commander in chief will be subordinate to the defense council and to the security council, consisting of the heads of states, and of course will be subordinate to the coordinated body of laws in the area of military reform."

Shakhray added that social policies will be coordinated. "There is a provision that the republics that are members of the Commonwealth will guarantee servicemen and their family members social protection and financial support and that they will not allow these to be encroached upon on the territory of the Commonwealth or on the territories of other republics, members of the former Union."

Commonwealth citizens who are members of national minorities will have their rights protected. They have equal rights, Shakhray concluded, quoting the agreement.

Shakray Says Accord Constitutional

LD1012120991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Excerpt] The signing of the agreement on the formation of the commonwealth of independent states is bringing out a variety of reactions. There have already been statements that this act is unconstitutional. Here is a comment by RSFSR State Counsellor Sergey Shakhray on these statements in an interview granted exclusively to Radio Rossii:

[Begin Shakhray recording] This agreement is, in its very essence, a profoundly constitutional, founding act. If we turn to history, the USSR was created in December 1922 by four republics. One of them, the Transcaucasian Federation, no longer exists as a state, but the three other founders exist—Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. In creating the Union in 1922, they handed over part of their powers. The sovereignty of these republics was primary, while the sovereignty of the USSR was derivative and secondary.

Each of these republics has, to a greater or lesser degree, proclaimed a return to its origins, a return to its sovereignty. In Ukraine there has been a referendum. Belarus and Russia have adopted corresponding declarations.

From the constututional point of view, from the point of view of the federative nature of the former Union, this document is profoundly constitutional. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Gaydar on Economic Aspects of Accord

LD0912235491

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2122 GMT on 9 December broadcast a studio interview with Russian Government Deputy Chairman Ye. T. Gaydar on the economic aspects of the Brest agreement.

After outlining the main things in the economic sphere on which agreement was reached during the Slav summit, Gaydar said: "The sides agreed on what was, perhaps, most difficult of all to agree on: that they would, together, finance the armed forces, that they are retaining a united command of strategic forces, and that they would agree in the very near future on the specific distribution of the burden of defense expenditure, and at the same time would together deal with the expenditures resulting from the terrible Chernobyl disaster, which hit all three republics. If we get away from the details, this is probably the most important, most substantial economic accord which it proved possible to reach over the past two days, an accord which, perhaps, substantially exceeds what could have been expected."

Replying to a question on the liberalization of prices, Gaydar said: "At the insistent request of the Governments of Ukraine and Belarus, we were forced to postpone by two weeks the planned timetable for the liberalization of prices. This was a difficult decision for us, not an easy one, but it is our deep conviction that it is fully compensated by coordination of action, by the fact that no disparities will arise here, nor will the conflicts that are inevitable in any unilateral actions, and by the fact that this liberalization of prices will be pursued on the basis of joint decisions in taxation.

"At the same time, taking account of the real situation that has emerged in Russia—everyone was expecting liberalization of prices any day, and as a result commodity operations were made rather difficult, simply no one wanted to sell anything while the price situation was not clear—the republics agreed that they would immediately increase supplies of the most important consumer goods, primarily food, to Russia, for the imminent and most difficult period."

Questioned about the actual date for the liberalization of prices, Gaydar said: "We are planning the liberalization of prices, following agreement with the republics, for 2 January."

Asked about the role of world prices in mutual settlements between republics, Gaydar said: "We have agreed to trade in a relatively limited range of vital types of products including oil, petroleum products, coal, coke, metals, grain, and meat, maintaining parity with world prices, at least until our prices need to adapt to world prices." Gaydar noted that the central Finance Ministry has already been liquidated and a new banking body will evidently be set up on the basis of the State Bank.

Gaydar expressed belief that the world will react with understanding to the agreements. "The world was most alarmed about the prospect of trade wars on the territory of the former Soviet Union, the emergence of customs barriers, the restriction of free trade, the unexpected appearance and uncoordinated introduction of national currencies, and the chaos of financial policy. This was, perhaps, the most important cause for alarm among international financial organizations and experts. I think the world will respond to this with a sigh of relief."

Gaydar added: "This significantly increases the chances of support, including serious economic support for our reforms and measures."

Having looked briefly at the Vneshekonombank's problems with a German bank and possible solutions, Gaydar was asked whether the new commonwealth will have a unified budget. He explained: "There will not be a unified budget. There will be the budgets of the republics, budgets of the states, and evidently there will be very insignificant expenditures on the upkeep of the coordinating bodies which are to be sited in Minsk, but what there will be in common, for the time being at least, is the defense budget. The fact that the republics have agreed jointly to bear the burden of defense spending and to coordinate their policies in this field is, perhaps, the most important agreement." Gaydar was pleased that the other republics have agreed to share this burden.

Asked in conclusion how the commonwealth's economy is to be managed, Gaydar responded: "On the basis of coordinated efforts to launch market methods of management."

Federation Affairs

Burbulis Interviewed on Current Events

LD1012002891 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1927 GMT 8 Dec 91

[Interview with Gennadiy Eduardovich Burbulis, secretary of state and first deputy prime minister of Russia, with correspondent N. Svanidze in Staraya Ploshchad; date not given; from the "Face to Face With Russia" program—live or recorded]

[Excerpt] [Svanidze] Hello. As agreed, we continue our meetings with those in charge of the Russian Government. Today, in this study at Staraya Ploshchad, once occupied by Suslov and Ligachev, we are meeting Gennadiy Burbulis, secretary of state and first deputy premier of Russia. Gennadiy Eduardovich, this past week was very complex, abounding in events. How would you comment on its results?

[Burbulis] Everyone is currently worried about three topics, three problems: prices, taxes, and food and goods. One can say that these three topics dominated the week and that there was concern and hope alike. The government has submitted to the Supreme Soviet a taxation policy in conditions of price liberalization, and I can, with great satisfaction, note that today the Supreme Soviet endorsed our proposals by an absolute majority. It adopted an appropriate law and we are getting a real opportunity to carry out, in a fairly concerted form, something that is of concern to the people of Russia: it is the liberalization or freeing of prices. Practically every week—and this week was no exception—we adopted some measure or another connected with extending social protection in advance to specific groups of the population. In particular, we adopted the decree by the president and the head of the government concerning the provision for the population of Russia, urgent measures—medicine, medical equipment—providing for an additional financing of this sphere and providing for a whole range of measures which are essential from the practical point of view. Many people are worried about the extent of consensus regarding the implementation by the Russian Government, of its reform program, mindful of the complex and contradictory ties between our enterprises and our territories and various republics of the former Union. I can assure you that we have either already concluded or are about to conclude economic agreements for the financial year 1992 and this goes practically for all republics. This is being done already according to new principles. In the first place, and for the most part, there is a process of conversion to world prices under way; in the second place, account is being taken of the economic reform program we are offering to all Russians today. Finally, there is a task to be resolved, otherwise we will find it very difficult to make headway: I mean the establishment of an effective and coordinated vertical system of executive authority.

All in all, our view is that this week was rather fruitful and it confirms the correctness of the course we had chosen. Among important plans for the next week, I would single out Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's planned meeting with the leading reformer-economists from the whole world, one can say. We have invited for a two-day meeting in Moscow with the president and members of the government many of those who have recently carried out reforms in various countries of the world over the past few years, and an absolute majority of them have responded. I refer to Balcerowicz from Poland, Sachs from the U.S., and many economists who have been pursuing reforms in Mexico, Chile, Eastern Europe, and Germany.

[Svanidze] Although the Ukrainian referendum did not have an explicit connection with Russia, in practice it had a direct bearing here, particularly on Russian economic reform. The republics now—and not just the Ukraine—are making tough demands regarding the pace of Russian reforms. What is going on? Is it an ultimatum? There is another question. I have the feeling—it is my own personal feeling and I may be wrong—that today, as a result of republican demands, the Russian Government, which proclaimed reform and commenced it, is experiencing a certain indecision. Is that so? What could you say about that?

[Burbulis] Your feeling is so serious, in terms of the consequences, that I will start with your final question. It is not, in fact, like that. It would give us great satisfaction if we could pursue our reforms in full accord with the governments of other republics, for we realize that this would be significantly more productive. At the same time, let me repeat what I have already said. We are in such an economic predicament today that we are to a large extent compelled to take actions despite what we would personally wish. It is a case of the government being unable not to take certain measures, and in that sense, we really cannot go around trying to persuade people and hang around and put our hope in other people. We are forced to pin our hope only on our own competence, consistency, and resolve.

[Svanidze] So your resolve is unshakeable at present?

[Burbulis] Under no circumstances can it be shaken. As for your first question—how serious an impact can the results of the 1 December referendum in the Ukraine have on all our activity? We are linked not just by a common desire to improve the way we live and to surmount the monstrous aftermath of our totalitarian system, but we are also linked by a great, vast sense of responsibility to our descendants for our common history. These are not dramatic phrases designed for poignant effect, but it is the credo of the leaders of the three republics. It seems to me that it is time for a precise, businesslike, and considered calculation as to with what joint actions and in what juridical and political forms we could most successfully solve our problems today.

[Svanidze] The activities of any government in any country, and particularly a centralized country like Russia, depends in no small measure on a stable situation in its capital. You could not call the current situation in Moscow stable. There are a number of problems. One of them is the incipient winter. The enormous food problem is also a worry to us, and the second problem is the difficult relations between the capital's mayor and Moscow city soviet. In particular, there are rumors in Moscow that Gavriil Kharitonovich Popov intends to resign. What can you say about these rumors, and what have you got to say to Muscovites about the way the food problem this winter is being tackled?

[Burbilis] We cannot allow the capital of Russia—the great and holy city of Moscow—to end up the most vulnerable in a difficult period for all of us. I can tell Muscovites that in this emergency situation practically all measures are being taken to deal with this successfully. Explicit instructions have been given to the Russian Government, the Moscow mayor's office, and the leaders of the Interstate Economic Committee, which we are going to have to carry out literally in the next few hours and days. It will mean the mobilization of both deliveries and state reserves and various kinds of resources, including centralized ones, to ensure that Moscow overcomes this crisis.

Rumors that Gavriil Kharitonovich is going to resign are indeed spreading, and it is difficult for me to confirm or deny them, but it seems to me that this is not the main problem in this regard. It all revolves around coordination between the executive and representative authorities in Moscow. There has been a prolonged clarification of relations between the mayor's office and Moscow city soviet. We must find enough courage to resolve this problem as decisively as possible in the nearest future. This is because in this case, Moscow is a litmus test of the whole power structure in all cities and areas of Russia.

[Svanidze] A wave of intimidating Russians with the economic reform and, in particular, with the freeing of prices, is now emerging or, to put it more correctly, gathering strength and it is very noticeable in papers such as PRAVDA and SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA. In your view: How reliable is the social foundation of the reform? How many people are there who really do believe the Russian Government, a government of reformers and who believe that it will be painful to begin with, but things will be okay later on?

[Burbulis] Our main task of everything we do is to convince and involve every Russian, convince him that the reforms are vitally necessary and practically viable. We must involve people above all; that is we must create such a system of conditions, economic conditions first and foremost, so that an interest emerges in producing, in becoming consumers, and in earning a lot in an honest way. It is a long time ago that we learned how to intimidate with reforms. This area already has its own, professional people. Evidently, however, this is being done if not with some aggressive cum revanchist aim in mind, then due to a naive concept that you can submerge the economic sickness in a sea of words and have it tamed. No, it is a serious but curable illness, only one needs a very precise diagnosis and a resolute system of measures.

The most important thing today is the sickness of the financial system, the monetary system. This is one of those cases when we can compare the financial system in the economy to the circulatory system in the human body. You can train a lot and build up your muscles, you can have injections and take pills to strengthen your liver and cardiac muscles, but if at the same time you ignore the fact that you have a blood disorder, that your circulatory system has been disrupted, then you are doomed. The same thing applies to the economy. You can do whatever you like, promise whatever you like, the good times, but if you neglect financial sickness then your economic future is doomed. What we are doing forms an element within the system of economic reforms, and here we shall see how more and more people in Russia consciously come round to the government's program. Regarding the social basis, this is a very complex issue. We do not have, in a pure form, the classic middle class that both wants to and can work in a free economy, understanding the laws of business and applying them in a competitive and creative way. Also, people are fed up with living off state handouts. People are fed up with waiting for a miracle and of begging in various forms. The absolute majority—and we constantly conduct research and make forecasts because of our measures—are becoming increasingly convinced that we cannot live like this, but we will not be able to live any better unless we change things. It is difficult to see anything in our program specifically directed at a specific social group. We think that it is directed at those who, irrespective of age and profession, have realized that without such resolute measures we will simply be unable to progress. I would not say that panic is prevalent. Many of those who are trying to frighten the public have no alternatives to put forward. This is where our strength lies. Nobody today can suggest anything else that is constructive and practical. Our strength is in our honesty. We do not hide the fact that we are taking measures that it will be difficult to live through, but it is one of those difficulties that are less painful the more resolutely they are tackled.

[Svanidze] In my view, the problem is that, in your expression, people want an economy that will pamper them.

[Burbulis] I think that the people of Russia have already suffered so much and seen such things that... [changes thought] Support today for the government's reforms, support for our programs, in every town and on every shop floor, in every firm—the main thing is support for the conviction that it is achievable if you directly involve yourself. Most important is the understanding that we will not permit neglect of those groups within society who are unable to actively fulfill themselves economically, that every day we shall in one way or another make social protection for them a priority. I am sure that we have selected the right aims, and we hope that most of the measures that we propose are justified. I would like once more to appeal to the people of Russia: If together we understand the necessity for these steps, then we will probably triumph.

[Svanidze] Thank you. [passage omitted]

Yeltsin To Meet Military Commanders 11 Dec

LD1012104191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0932 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 10 Dec (TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has canceled all meetings planned for today, as well as other measures, and is working on documents at his dacha, this TASS correspondent was informed at the Russian White House.

A busy day is planned for the Russian president tomorrow, beginning with a meeting with the commanders of the military districts at 0800.

A speech by Boris Yeltsin in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet is planned for 12 December. This will be expressly devoted to the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the documents for which were signed on 8 December by the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine. [passage omitted]

Russian Democratic Party Congress Ends

LD0912184891 Moscow TASS in English 1721 GMT 8 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow December 8 TASS—The Democratic Party of Russia adopted a new political statement, describing itself as a liberal conservative party, at its two-day third congress which ended in the Moscow Trade Union House's Hall of Columns today.

"While sharing liberal principles, giving priority to human rights and freedoms, free trade, free enterprise, and private property, the party believes that only a strong democratic state can guarantee these values," the political statement says.

Democratic Party Chairman Nikolay Travkin said in his report to the congress and confirmed it in the documents approved by the delegates that his party favoured a strong state and a revamped, strong democratic union, as well as a strong and indivisible Russia.

Also today, the congress adopted an appeal to the Russian people's deputies to say "yes" to the Union treaty, arguing that the signing of the treaty would help alleviate the tension of inter-ethnic, social and economic problems, debunk nationalist adventurers and calm down the people.

The signing of the Union treaty is being hampered by ambitious presidents and politicians, the statement says.

The congress approved by a majority the resolution on the party's stance towards the Democratic Russia Movement and proclaimed it unadvisable for the party to remain the movement's collective member. The resolution cites differences with the Democratic Russia leaders on the state structure of the Union and Russia as the main reason for the withdrawal.

The Democratic Party of Russia and other member-parties of the popular accord bloc, which have withdrawn from the Democratic Russia Movement, have consistently opposed the disintegration of the Union and Russia and defended the idea of a strong democratic state and a united Russian Federation.

Some delegates representing local organisations spoke out against breaking with the Democratic Russia Movement. They blamed the split on the party leaders and said it was out of place and ran counter to the interests of democrats. Deputy chairman of the Volgograd regional organisation of the Democratic Party of Russia Valery Zenin told TASS the split was instigated from above and motivated by the ambitions of the party chiefs, while local organisations of different parties continued to interact within the Democratic Russia framework.

"We have much work to do to carry through economic reform and suppress sabotage on the part of the old nomenklatura, and all democratic forces must rally for the purpose," he said.

"We differ with the party's central leadership not only in our attitude toward the Democratic Russia Movement but also in methods used to ensure the party's unity," chairman of the Novosibirsk party organisation Yakov Savchenko told TASS. Regional party organisations are under pressure from above, the congress is organised using apparat methods and the party's new rules tend towards democratic centralism, he said.

On the other hand, Timur Khanov, a delegate from Daghestan, said "an overwhelming majority of delegates support Nikolay Travkin".

Urges Halt to Union Disintegration

OW0912232391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Democratic Party of Russia (DPR) has urged the republican authorities to sign the draft union treaty without delay and to do all they can to prevent the USSR from disintegrating.

In an appeal published on Monday [9 December] the DPR states that if the USSR disappears, this will mean an economic collapse, millions of refugees and a "horrible step toward a civil war on the soil of a nuclear superpower." According to the document, the union's disintegration today will mean Russia's disintegration tomorrow.

The leadership of the DPR invites Muscovites to attend a meeting authorized by Moscow's mayor which is to take place on Tuesday [10 December] at 19:00 in Manezh Square.

Calls for Union's 'Perpetuation'

LD0912223391 Moscow TASS in English 1508 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow December 9 TASS—"The Democratic Party of Russia [DPR] comes out for the unconditional perpetuation of the Union," chairman of the DPR Nikolay Travkin told TASS today.

"Some 90 per cent of the delegates that attended the latest, third extraordinary congress of the DPR voted for the Union. Of course, a renovated union. Only 26 delegates voted against it. This may be regarded as a reflection of our public opinion," Travkin believes, "because 71 regions of Russia were represented at the congress."

The congress called on the people's deputies and members of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation to sign without further delay the version of the Union treaty, which was published in the press and forwarded to the parliaments, without new demands and amendments. Travkin stressed that the DPR regarded the Union's statehood and the fate of Russia's own statehood as its primary concern.

Yeltsin Differences With Government Denied

PM0912145591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Aleksandr Linkov report under the rubric "In the RSFSR Supreme Soviet": "Crossing an Abyss"]

[Text] "Since yesterday President Yeltsin has been working in the government building, and he intends to stay there for at least a month. That small fact alone shows that there are no differences of opinion between the chairman of the government and his team," A. Shokhin, RSFSR minister for labor and the population's employment, stated at the traditional deputies' meeting with state advisers and government representatives.

"There are no differences of opinion between the president and the Supreme Soviet," Vladimir Shumeyko, deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, noted at this meeting. "Today Boris Yeltsin had a long conversation with the Supreme Soviet Presidium leadership and, during the constructive discussion, common viewpoints were found on the most acute problems."

The main theme of the deputies' conversation with government representatives and state adviser Sergey Shakhray was economic: first and foremost, how to protect people from hyperinflation, especially citizens who are less well off. On 6 December the Supreme Soviet is to discuss a letter from the president in which he asks parliament to move the date for increasing the minimum wage to 1 January 1992, but how are we to get through this last month? Aleksandr Shokhin informed deputies of the measures adopted, admitting that it would be difficult but that it could not be helped.

At the meeting, state adviser Sergey Shakhray promised to meet with the Moscow government, which, according to the deputies, "is creating a tyranny with prices," raising them by factors of 10 even before the official liberalization.

Today the RSFSR Supreme Soviet chambers are working separately.

Shakhray Justifies Ban on Communist Party

PM1012121391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Dec 91 Union Edition p 3

[Interview with S. Shakhray, RSFSR state counselor for legal policy, by Yu. Feofanov; place and date not given: "'There Is No Such Party!'"]

[Text] [Feofanov] We are all familiar with the painting entitled "Such a Party Exists!" reproduced in millions of copies. The painting shows Lenin stating his claim to power. The Russian president has said: There is no such party! I appreciate that the wording is different, but this is being taken by people to mean: "I have banned." What, in your view, Sergey Mikhaylovich, lies behind the lines of the presidential decree? The destruction of party structures or the destruction of the party?

[Shakhray] I also contend that there no such party. In stopping the activity of the CPSU and the RSFSR Communist Party on Russian territory, President Yeltsin stopped the activity not of a party, but of a party state in which all structures were not merely permeated by the capillaries of primary party organizations but were connected and organized hierarchically. The CPSU was never a party in the ordinary sense of the term. It was a state bureaucratic mechanism disciplined on military lines (an "Order of sword-bearers," as Stalin accurately put it) which supplanted the elected organs of power for decades. Every government law and resolution had to be approved in the CPSU Central Committee, and an official could be appointed within the state structures only after an appropriate decision by party organs. So what existed in our country in that case: a party state or a state party? I am convinced that the CPSU was not a party in the generally recognized sense, so the president has not banned a party.

[Feofanov] Let us assume this to be so. Does the president not thereby create room for maneuver for that same nomenklatura? It has gone into hiding or is camouflaging itself, and, for example, the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) is being openly set up. Why should Yeltsin not take radical measures? Why, say, not institute by decree a tribunal to judge the party as such? This in no way means a trial of party members. At Nuremberg the Nazi party was condemned, but that did not affect party members who had not participated in crimes. Moreover, under the law only a court can ban a party.

[Shakhray] You are proceeding from the premise that the CPSU is a party, and you are placing it under the law, the law of a state which, incidentally, does not exist. I contend that the CPSU is not a party. Therein lies the whole crux of the issue. The name is camouflage, and no one today should be misled by the external attributes—the procedure for joining the party, statutes, and program—just as no one should be misled by the principle of "democratic centralism." It was not a party but rather a kind of mafia structure with a very brutal mechanism of rule.

It is possible to examine the issue from the standpoint of "arguing from contraries," as the mathematicians put it. Let us assume that the CPSU really is a party. Why then and on what basis did its leadership:

—become, first, the "leading and guiding" force of the August coup and the antidemocratic plot to forcibly overthrow the elected organs of state power? The parliamentary hearings and documents discovered in the offices of the Central Committee, obkoms [oblast committees], and raykoms [rayon committees] confirm this irrefutably;

—second, contrary to the essence of any party, it fought against democratic transformations in our country, which documents from party archives also show, and it did so using a weapon proscribed in civilized countries—by fomenting nationalist movements, exacerbating ethnic conflicts in certain regions of the country, and stirring autonomous republics up against Russia;

—and third, it sowed the seeds of social discord and class hatred among people who were equally badly off and made first one and then another stratum of people take the blame for its own mistakes. Are examples needed, given that all CPSU policy from 1917 on was built upon such principles?

Not to mention the activity of the "party" in the international arena, where it placed our security under direct threat: sustaining subversive regimes, exporting gold and strategic information, etc. Finally, war, including the Afghan war, was launched by decision of the "party" politburo.

[Feofanov] Do you not think, Sergey Mikhaylovich, that you have now substantiated convincingly enough the charges against this organization called a party. It would be difficult for the defense to refute this, but a charge is not the same as a sentence. As a lawyer you understand that the formality of the law is not mere formality. The "order of sword-bearers" was officially regarded as a party and recognized throughout the world as the "ruling party in the USSR."

[Shakhray] Recognized by whom and in what way? The Russian Communist Party was altogether outside the law, since it was not registered. The registration of the CPSU was pure fiction. For decades the USSR Justice Ministry, run by the CPSU Central Committee, dutifully registered the CPSU in flagrant violation of the law.

Let us return, however, to the problem of a trial. We have no legal mechanism such as was created for Nuremberg. That was altogether a unique event—the condemnation of the ideology of Nazism. A completely different situation obtains here. We have neither the substantive nor procedural norms. Should we create special norms, as was done in Nuremberg? I regard the organizing of a trial of the CPSU as simply dangerous to ordinary Communists. Everything will spill out onto the pages of the press and television screens and serve to incite anticommunist hysteria, nor could lynchings of the party nonenklatura and undeserved persecution of ordinary party members be excluded.

[Feofanov] But these are practical considerations: Is it expedient to organize a trial or not? We are talking about the law.

[Shakhray] It is clear today that the threat of new putsches and coups will hang over our country, our republic, and all of us as long as CPSU structures exist. No reforms will "work" while the chief saboteurs—party leaders of every stripe and rank—remain in power. Being fully and honestly aware of the prevailing crisis, the RSFSR president felt obliged to take all necessary measures. The decree "On the Activity of the CPSU and the RSFSR Communist Party" is aimed at this. In promulgating it the president based himself on Article 7 of the RSFSR Constitution, which, as is well known, bans the activity of organizations bent on forcibly changing the constitutional system and fomenting social, national, and religious discord. This is not an arbitrary principle, but constitutes the legal and juridical principle of the decree. It was adopted in execution of a specific norm of the Constitution.

We are here dealing with one of a few instances where a norm of the constitution is directly brought into operation because of a gap in the legislation. Until there exists a legislative basis for the disbandment of illegal parties, organizations, armed formations, nationalist groupings, etc., only articles of the constitution brought directly into operation can protect citizens and the state.

That does not mean that this state of affairs should be maintained. On the contrary, the constitutional gap should be plugged as quickly as possible. By the way, that does not only go for this gap.

Further on Shakray Comments

LD0912153191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Russian Federation state adviser Sergey Shakhray has circulated his commentary on the official end to the CPSU and the RSFSR Communist Party. This has been done in connection with the Russian presidential decree of 6 November 1991.

The commentary notes that as a result of the activities of the CPSU, the country found itself under the total control of the upper echelons of the party and of its nomenklatura. The CPSU was not a party in the sense accepted by the civilized world. Its policy in the international arena was confrontational. The party forced us to play the role of gendarme in Hungary, Czechoslavakia, and Afghanistan, and people within this country who held different ideas were persecuted. The August coup and the investigations of its organizers have highlighted the true essence of the CPSU.

Sergey Shakhray's commentary notes that the CPSU was the governing force behind the August coup—the antidemocratic plot that aimed to overthrow by force the legitimately elected bodies of state authority. This is confirmed by documents uncovered in the offices of the CPSU Central Committee, oblast committees, and rayon committees. Sergey Shakhray describes as dangerous demands to try the CPSU, as that would force society into new confrontation.

Rutskoy's Party Supports Price Liberalization

PM1012114391 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 p 2

[V. Nikiforova report under the "In Parties and Movements" rubric: "Backing for A. Rutskoy"]

[Text] RSFSR Vice President A. Rutskoy's trip to Siberia and his categorical opinions regarding the impossibility of liberalizing prices without privatization at the same time caused a commotion in the house on Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment.

It was not only members of the government that took fright, but members of the People's Party of Free Russia were also concerned for their leader. V. Lipitskiy, chairman of the party's board, commented on A. Rutskoy's speeches and statements at a press conference, confirming that the People's Party of Free Russia Board agrees with his stance.

A. Rutskoy, chairman of the party council, is fully entitled to speak like that because the protocol signed by the Russian president on cooperation with political parties (eight of them) is not being implemented. The purpose of A. Rutskoy's speeches is to make amendments to the government's policy now, before irreversible steps are taken.

Supreme Soviet

Proceedings From 6 Dec Presidium Reported

LD0712120491

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2029 GMT on 6 December, in its regularly scheduled "At the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Session" program, broadcast recorded highlights from the 6 December proceedings of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. The session is chaired by RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov.

At 2029 GMT, Khasbulatov announced that the first question will be on the law on increasing the minimum wage. He says that Deputy Mikhail Lvovich Zakharov will address this issue.

Zakharov took the floor and suggested support for the the law, which has not yet been signed by the president. He says RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin has asked for a postponement of the date of implementation for the law from 1 December to 1 January. The relevant commission supports this request, as does the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

Zakharov said that some enterprises want the new minimum wage to be introduced gradually over the first quarter of the year. The relevant commission proposed that in the budgetary sphere this should be done from 1 January, while in the sphere of production and services in can be done over the first quarter of the year.

Zakharov then suggested that Yeltsin cancel all existing presidential decrees concerning the minimum wage, since this issue is within the power of the Supreme Soviet and not the president. Zakharov also thinks that there can be no preventive increase of pay before the liberation of prices.

Khasbulatov then called for a vote on the first amendment, which is the delay to 1 January. The amendment passed. The second amendment on implementation also passed.

At 2034 GMT, Deputy Pochinok introduced the value-added tax debate. He said the government has suggested that laws examined earlier plus amendments to them be considered instead of Yeltsin's decree. There is a presidential amendment on value-added tax asking for a 28 percent rate. The government wants 32 percent. The relevant committee believes that 20 percent is the optimum rate based on international experience, but the government says the higher figure is required to finance its ambitious reform program.

A government representative identified only as Igor Timurovich said that 20 percent is normal under normal circumstances, but if social programs are not to be cut, tax revenue must be increased. Direct taxation of enterprises would reduce incentives. Indirect taxation of the consumer is thus the only way out. He said that the 32 percent requested would allow the government to enter a period of price liberalization with greater confidence.

A vote was taken: the 32 percent rate did not pass, but the 28 percent rate did.

Pochinok continued, saying the president has asked that tea, sugar, and gasoline be exempt. A draft law on this passed. Pochinok then pointed the deputies toward a draft law on taxation of enterprises, which passed.

At 2051 GMT an unnamed deputy made a statement on North and South Ossetia. The blockade of South Ossetia is growing in intensity, he said. It was decided to examine the situation in Ossetia at a forthcoming session.

The RSFSR Supreme Soviet will continue its proceedings on 7 December. The recorded highlights ended at 2053 GMT.

7 Dec Proceedings

LD0912003691

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2123 GMT on 7 December broadcast recorded highlights of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session in Moscow on 7 December.

Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov gave the floor to Aleksandr Pochinok, who said that the subject of the discussion is the draft law on taxation of an individual. He said that each deputy has received copies of three documents: the new draft law which takes into account amendments; the previous text of the draft law circulated for comparison; and the RSFSR president's variant of the draft law.

At 2129 GMT Deputy Grachev said that regular students' scholarships are exempt from taxation but not the higher scholarships given to the brightest students; this is absurd. Voting took place, and 78 deputies voted for it and 15 against.

At 2130 GMT Deputy Yevtushenko proposed that parents and wives of servicemen who die in service should be compensated. Pochinok said there is no need to specify particular groups of population since they are all covered by the clause on compensations. An unidentified deputy suggested that workers of law enforcement bodies are also covered by compensations as well as servicemen. Voting took place on the amendment that compensations are exempt from taxation in all cases, and 84 voted in favor.

At 2133 GMT Pochinok said there are three variants of tax rates. He called on deputies to choose the variant proposed by the RSFSR president which takes into account an enormous jump in prices.

Deputy Zakharov called on deputies to adopt the presidential variant. He also said that excessive incomes should be taxed in accordance with a separate taxation law. He said that it is necessary to make some kind of announcement on radio or television since people fear tax increases, and some of them are currently gathering outside.

At 2136 GMT Shumeyko said that he spoke today on Mayak, Russia's Radio, and also to journalists with regard to taxation and that it is unlikely that people will overreact. An unidentified deputy said there is no need for numerous taxation laws.

At 2139 GMT Khasbulatov proposed that deputies vote for the government's package. The voting took place, and the draft law was adopted on the whole.

Pochinok then read the title of another RSFSR draft law "On registration fees from individuals engaged in entrepreneurial activities." The draft law was passed as a result of the voting. Pochinok said the law will be introduced as of 1 January 1992, and the local authorities are to insure its implementation.

At 2141 GMT an unidentified deputy said that it is necessary to bear in mind that some people have registered for a period of several years and some people are due for re-registration at the end of the year.

Voting then took place on introducing the law on 1 January 1992, and 75 deputies voted for it and nine against.

The program ended at 2143 GMT.

9 Dec Proceedings

LD1012011391

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2133 GMT on 9 December broadcast recorded highlights of proceedings at the 9 December session of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session in Moscow. The program opened with Budget Commission member Pochinok introducing amendments to the law on taxation of property.

At 2134 GMT a deputy said that impending price liberalization should be reflected in the relevant tax rates.

At 2135 GMT Pochinok replied that this will be taken into consideration. The law was passed. Pochinok read a decision setting out relevant steps to be taken to pave the way for the law. The decision was passed.

At 2138 GMT an unidentified deputy asked about property valuations. Pochinok made clarifications, and deputies commented on specific amendments to the law on state duties. Duties on passports, hunting guns, etc. were discussed. The law on state duties was passed. A further decision on setting out administrative steps to implement the law was voted on. The program ended at this point at 2154 GMT.

Presidium Members on Ratifying Commonwealth Pact

OW1012124291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1150 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to IF's [INTERFAX's] sources, members of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet do not rule out that President Boris Yeltsin may urge parliament on Thursday [12 December] to ratify the Commonwealth agreement concluded by Russia, Belorussia and the Ukraine.

A group of MPs [members of parliament] who asked not to be identified said Mr. Yeltsin might "ask deputies to go" in the event of their refusal to ratify the agreement. The implication is that the president might exercise his exclusive right to dissolve the parliament so that a new parliamentary body would discuss the agreement's ratification later.

Chambers Hold Separate Debates, Discuss Decrees

PM0912164991 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Parliamentary commentator Aleksandr Linkov report: "Fourth Session of RSFSR Supreme Soviet: Decisions Made Must Be Fully Implemented"]

[Text] ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA parliamentary commentator Aleksandr Linkov reports from the White House:

On 4 December Russia's Supreme Soviet deputies worked in the chambers. One urgent question—"On measures to ensure a stable situation in the RSFSR and the integrity of its territory"—was submitted to the Soviet of Nationalities session. From the very first minutes of the chamber session, deputies spoke with concern about the worrying situation in Russia, particularly in the North Caucasus.

"I met with representatives of the most diverse parties and movements," he said. "They all support [vystupayut za] Russia and cannot imagine themselves without it, but they all stressed that it is at the local level that Russia is felt to be absent. Our problem is that when adopting decisions we do not see them through to the end."

Members of the Soviet of the Republic began their working day with a report on draft normative acts received from the RSFSR president and the government, which was delivered by Vladimir Shumeyko, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Then the Soviet of the Republic members began discussing the unified wage system for law enforcement agency workers in the RSFSR.

The crime rate in the RSFSR has risen again: In the first half of the year, 1.46 million crimes were recorded, or 22 percent more than in the corresponding period of 1990. This information was given yesterday by Vyacheslav Lebedev, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, who delivered a report at a separate session of the chambers of the Russian parliament. Deputies listened to the report and adopted a resolution designed to improve the work of the courts.

Social Protection Minister on Responsibilities

PM1012114991 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian First Edition 6 Dec 91 p 1

[Sergey Nikitin report: "In the RSFSR Government: Good Luck, Minister!"]

[Text] A routine meeting has been held at the press center on Staraya Square. The journalists' guest this time was Ella Pamfilova, RSFSR minister for the social protection of the population, who is well known for her activeness in the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee on Privileges and Benefits.

The minister complained that the choice of her department's title was not entirely auspicious: To attempt to protect all strata of the population is completely unrealistic today. Thus the main task will be to protect the weakest: old people, disabled people, and large families.

At the local level it is being proposed to expand the network of so-called "urgent social help centers," which will highlight those in need of protection and provide them with foodstuffs and essential industrial goods.

The small and poorly trained cadres of the former Social Security Department [Sobes] could hardly cope with these problems. That is why the government decided to set up the Russian social institute for the training of specialists in all the necessary professions: social lawyers, economists, sociologists, and even journalists.

All the plans, even the most encouraging ones, will come to naught unless we find reliable sources of financial and material support. The ministry is pinning great hopes on the Social Protection Fund, which by government decision will be created in the very near future. A certain percentage of revenues will be guaranteed by the state, but the most substantial contributors must be private individuals and rich patrons.

"The idea of leasing out dachas, sanatoriums, and other former properties of the party-economic nomenklatura and using the profit to implement our plans is an old one," E. Pamfilova said. "Today the CPSU's former property is being completely privatized by a new generation of functionaries! The situation must be rectified."

On the theme of humanitarian aid, E. Pamfilova announced that henceforth the distribution of consignments of charity goods will be handled exclusively by her ministry, and she promised to do everything possible to ensure that not a single pill or packet of pasta fails to reach its proper recipient.

International Affairs

Supreme Soviet Delegation Arrives in Beijing

Deputies Seek Wider Contacts

LD0712022491 Moscow TASS in English 2223 GMT 6 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Oreshin]

[Text] Beijing December 6 TASS— The delegation of the Russian Supreme Soviet held talks with members of the foreign affairs committee of China's National People's Congress in Beijing to discuss prospects for developing relations between the two countries and establishing an inter-parliamentary dialogue.

"On the basis of all the positive developments in our relations with China over the past few years, Russia will be searching for new ways to widen bilateral cooperation in various fields", Vladimir Lukin, head of the Russian delegation and chairman of the Russian parliamentary committee on international affairs and foreign economic ties, told TASS.

The first priority will be establishing mutual trade and economic ties which are now in a state of flux because of economic difficulties in our country, Lukin said adding this could be promoted by creating a joint Russian-Chinese economic commission which would help coordinate efforts of the two countries in this direction. With a view to developing cooperation with China, Russia is ready to interact with other sovereign republics, including Kazakhstan.

In the course of the negotiations, international issues were also discussed. Both countries expressed an interest in resolving the Cambodian problem and lessening tension on the Korean peninsula.

Yeltsin Message Given to President

LD0812175391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1606 GMT 7 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Oreshin]

[Text] Beijing, 7 Dec (TASS)—Russia intends to build its relations with China on the basis of the principles set out in the joint Soviet-Chinese documents of 1989 and 1990, developing and deepening mutually advantageous links on all fronts. This is stated in a personal message from Boris Yeltsin to PRC President Yang Shangkun, which was handed over by Vladimir Lukin at a meeting today with PRC State Coucnil Vice Premier Wu Xueqian. Lukin is leader of an RSFSR Supreme Soviet delegation now visiting here.

The program for the visit by this first representative parliamentary delegation from Russia is very crowded. Conversations and meetings were also held today at the PRC Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Foreign Trade, and the Center for International Research attached to the PRC State Council.

As was noted at these meetings, contacts between Russia and China are evolving successfully, and this trend must be consolidated. The sides spoke in favor of adding a new dynamism to the talks on mutual reduction of armed forces in the areas close to the border and working out measures of trust in the military field. The sides discussed the question of under what conditions and at what stage the PRC could join the dialogue in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Russia accounts for nearly 80 percent of China's trade and economic relations with the USSR. In this connection, specific proposals on revitalizing contacts in this field, taking into consideration the redistribution of powers between Russia and the center which is under way, were put forward. Good prospects for trade in the border zone, in which Russia plays a special part, were also discussed.

In discussing international issues, it was pointed out that Russia is playing an increasingly active and substantial part in discussing and solving issues concerning the Asia-Pacific region. A useful exchange of opinions took place on issues of the region which cause special concern, including the situation on the Korean peninsula and in Indochina.

Yeltsin Signs Agreement With Estonian Leader

LD0912125791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1150 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Aleksandras Budris]

[Text] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)—Today RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin today met Arnold Ruutel, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian Republic. A joint communique was signed in accordance with the results of the meeting, which lasted for approximately one hour.

Ruutel Wants Borders Corrected

LD0912152291 Moscow TASS in English 1419 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Aleksandr Budris]

[Text] Moscow December 9 TASS—Estonia wants to "correct to a certain extent" the present-day borders with Russia, but believes the problem must be solved at interstate negotiations between the two countries, Estonian parliamenrtary speaker Arnold Ruutel told reporters after his meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin today. He did not comment on Yeltsin's reaction.

The two statesmen agreed that "the status, the strength of Soviet troops in Estonia, as well as the schedule of their withdrawal" have to be defined in the near future. Estonia may build housing in Russia for the withdrawing Soviet troops in case it receives financial foreign aid, Ruutel said.

Russia and the Baltic state agreed to continue bilateral shipments of goods on a clearing basis at agreed prices, the Estonian parliamentary speaker said.

We agreed that legislative guarantees are necessary to protect the rights of Russians in Estonia and of Estonians in Russia, he added.

Communique on Yeltsin-Ruutel Talks

LD0912194391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1840 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Aleksandras Budris]

[Text] Moscow, 9 December (TASS)—Russia and Estonia have stated their intention to urgently enter into large-scale direct bilateral talks, says a communique released here today on the results of the meetings on 1 November and 9 December in Moscow between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Arnold Ruutel, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian Republic.

During the talks, the document notes, priority attention will be focused on settling issues connected with citizenship and insuring and protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens. The sides have agreed to work out an agreement on questions of migration.

Having discussed the immediate prospects for bilateral trade and economic relations, the sides considered it expedient to conclude an appropriate agreement for 1992. An agreement was reached on accounting in 1992 for mutual supplies of produce and rendering services on the principles accepted in international trade.

The sides exchanged information on certain questions connected with the stay of USSR Armed Forces units on the territory of the Estonian Republic and expressed willingness to assist in speeding up their phased withdrawal on the basis of a treaty.

The participants in the meeting reached the conclusion that the process of regulating bilateral relations should conclude with the elaboration and conclusion of a long-term, fully fledged treaty on interstate relations between Estonia and Russia, the communique says.

Khasbulatov Arrives in Seoul on Official Visit

LD0812094991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0710 GMT 8 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Oleg Abramkin]

[Text] Seoul, 8 Dec (TASS)—Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, arrived here today on an official visit at the invitation of the parliament of the ROK. During his three-day visit the head of the Russian parliament is expected to be received by President No Tae-u and will meet Pak Chun-kyu, chairman of this country's National Assembly, and other eminent politicians to discuss the development of bilateral relations. The visit agenda also includes a trip to prominent industrial enterprises and meetings with representatives of South Korean business circles.

Answering journalists' questions at Seoul's Kimpo International Airport, R. Khasbulatov noted "the good prospects for the rapprochement" of Russia and the Republic of Korea. He said that under the new conditions the Russian state will adhere to all international obligations assumed by the Soviet Union covering the whole spectrum of political and economic problems. Expressing readiness to build relations between the RSFSR and the ROK on the basis of the experience already amassed in Soviet-South Korean relations, he stated: "It is going to be a question of Soviet-Korean relations growing into Russian-Korean relations."

Discusses Cooperation

LD0912105591 Moscow TASS in English 1024 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Oleg Abramkin]

[Text] Seoul December 9 TASS—The speakers of parliaments of the Russian Federation and South Korea spoke here today in favour of forming an interparliament body for cooperation between the two countries. The agreement was reached in a meeting of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation Ruslan Khasbulatov with Pak Chung-ku, the chairman of the National Assembly of Republic of Korea, on whose invitation Khasbulatov had arrived here on an official visit.

Pak Chung-ku supported the proposal of R. Khasbulatov to first of all develop interparliamentary relations between the RSFSR and the Republic of Korea. According to the members of the Russian delegation, the joint interparliamentary body will in particular pay attention to the state of Koreans living on the Russian territory as citizens of the republic having equal rights. The questions related to their fate, in which special interest is being taken in South Korea, are at present being dealt by the human rights comission of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.

R. Khasbulatov expressed full understanding of the Korean problem and [words indistinct] that Russia as any other democratic country cannot agree to spreading of nuclear weapons, having in view the reports of possibility of production of its own nuclear weapons by North Korea in near future. We are for strict international control on production and possession of nuclear weapons, he said. As far as Korea's unification is concerned, Russia promises its full support to the Korean people in solving this problem.

Pak Chung-ku made a special mention of Russia's role in ensuring stability, peace and prosperity in countries of Asia and the South Pacific region.

Meets ROK Political Leaders

LD0912173491 Moscow TASS in English 1505 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Seoul December 9 TASS—Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian parliament, met South Korean political leaders today—chairman of the ruling Democratic Liberal Party Kim Yong-sam and leader of the opposition New Democratic Party Kim Tae-chung.

Kim Yong-sam noted the heightened interest of Korean people in problems of the former Soviet Union. He stressed that stability there was an inalienable part of world stability and international security in general. He expressed in this connection anxiety over the presence of nuclear weapons on the territories of the Union republics.

Explaining the situation in our country, Khasbulatov noted that "we are also concerned about the presence of nuclear weapons in Ukraine and Kazakhstan. We are conducting talks to liquidate nuclear weapons in the republics parallel with their adequate reduction on the territory of Russia."

Receiving Khasbulatov and the delegation he leads, Kim Tae-chung said the Republic of Korea and Russia had everything necessary to develop comprehenive relations. However, the South Korean side is now interested in problems linked with the implementation of the economic reform in Russia and with political stability there. It is also concerned about the future of South Korean credits to the Soviet Union.

"Khabulatov's visit is particularly important, because Seoul is now deciding the question whether to continue financial aid to the USSR or not," Kim Tae-chung noted.

Meets ROK President

LD1012111791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0735 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] Seoul, 10 Dec (TASS)—Today ROK President No Tae-u received at his Seoul residence "Chongwadae" the RSFSR parliamentary delegation led by RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov, here on an official visit. The visit, No Tae-u said at the meeting, will serve as "a stimulating factor" on the way to further development of relations between the two countries.

The conversation between the Russian delegation and the president of the ROK took place behind closed doors.

Yeltsin To Defend Russians in Kurils Issue

OW0612201491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1716 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Yeltsin has stated once again that the transfer of the South Kuril islands to Japan is out of the question, his envoy Vitaly Guliy told newsmen in Khabarovsk. He discussed this problem with Boris Yeltsin himself, he said. Nevertheless, since this problem is recognized as existing, said V. Guliy with reference to President Yeltsin, it should be resolved in accordance with international law and justice in the interests of Russia and its citizens living on the islands.

The other interpretations of the stand taken by the Russian President and Government are designed to discredit them, said V. Guliy. They reflect political games on the part of those who oppose the present policy. V. Guliy called for a critical attitude to reports on the Kuril problem published by the Japanese news media and by the Russian press.

Opposition to Return of Islands

OW1012092191 Moscow Radio Moscow in Japanese 1400 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] According to a telephone opinion poll conducted by VOSTOK RUSSI [name as heard], a weekly magazine published in Magadan in the Soviet Far East, it was disclosed that 63 percent of the people living in the Soviet Far East oppose the return of the four South Kuril islands to Japan. In Sakhalin Oblast alone, almost 75 percent of the residents are opposed to handing over the four islands to Japan. Moreover, 85 percent of the Sakhalin Oblast residents think that in case the four Kuril islands are turned over to Japan, a review of the Russian borders will affect other regions as well.

Meanwhile, when he spoke about the the issue of the four South Kuril islands, Russian President Boris Yeltsin pointed out that the cessation of the four islands to Japan is impossible.

Interrepublic Affairs

‘Full Text’ of Commonwealth Agreement

LD0912204791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1805 GMT 9 Dec 91

[“Full text” of Agreement Establishing a Commonwealth of Independent States]

[Text] Moscow, 9 Dec (TASS)—We, the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation, and the Ukraine, as founder states of the USSR which signed the Union Treaty of 1922, henceforth described as the high-contracting parties, conclude that the USSR has ceased to exist as a subject of international law and as a geopolitical reality.

Taking as our basis the historic community of our peoples and the ties that have been established between them, taking into account the bilateral treaties concluded between the contracting parties;

Striving to build democratic law-governed states;

Intending to develop our relations on the basis of mutual recognition and respect for state sovereignty, the inalienable right to self-determination, the principles of equality and non-interference in internal affairs, repudiation of the use of force and of economic or any other methods of coercion, settlement of contentious problems by means of mediation, and other generally recognized principles and norms of international law;

Considering that further development and strengthening of relations of friendship, good-neighborliness, and mutually beneficial cooperation between our states correspond to the vital national interest of their peoples and serve the cause of peace and security;

Confirming our adherence to the goals and principles of the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and other documents of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;

And committing ourselves to observe the generally recognized internal norms on human rights and the rights of peoples,

We have agreed the following:

ARTICLE 1.

The high-contracting parties form the Commonwealth of Independent States.

ARTICLE 2.

The high-contracting parties guarantee their citizens equal rights and freedoms, regardless of nationality or other distinctions. Each of the high-contracting parties guarantees the citizens of the other parties, as well as persons without citizenship who live on its territory, civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights and freedoms in accordance with generally recognized international norms of human rights, regardless of national allegiance or other distinctions.

ARTICLE 3.

The high-contracting parties, desiring to promote the expression, preservation, and development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious individuality of the national minorities resident on their teritories and that of the unique ethnocultural regions that have come into being, take them under their protection.

ARTICLE 4.

The high-contracting parties will develop the equal and mutually beneficial cooperation of their peoples and states in the spheres of politics, the economy, culture, education, public health, protection of the environment, science, trade, and in the humanitarian and other fields; they will promote broad exchange of information, and will conscientiously and unconditionally observe reciprocal obligations.

The parties consider it a necessity to conclude agreements on cooperation in these spheres.

ARTICLE 5.

The high-contracting parties recognize and respect one another’s territorial integrity and the inviolability of existing borders within the Commonwealth. They guarantee openness of borders and freedom of movement for citizens and of transmission of information within the Commonwealth.

ARTICLE 6.

The member states of the Commonwealth will cooperate in safeguarding international peace and security and in implementing effective measures for reducing armaments and military spending. They seek the elimination of all nuclear weapons and universal, total disarmament under strict international control. The parties will respect one another’s aspiration to attain the status of a non-nuclear zone and a neutral state. The member states of the community will preserve and maintain under united command a common military-strategic space, including unified control over nuclear weapons, the procedure for implementing which is regulated by a special agreement. They also jointly guarantee the necessary conditions for the stationing and functioning of the strategic armed forces and for their material and social provision. The parties contract to pursue a harmonized policy on questions of social protection and pension provision for servicemen and their families.

ARTICLE 7.

The high-contracting parties recognize that within the sphere of their activities, the following will be implemented on an equal basis through the common coordinating institutions of the commonwealth:

—Cooperation in the sphere of foreign policy;

—Cooperation in forming and developing the united economic area and the common European and Eurasian markets, and in the area of customs policy;

—Cooperation in developing transport and communication systems;

—Cooperation in preservation of the environment and participation in the creation of a comprehensive international system of ecological safety;

—Migration policy issues;

—Fighting organized crime.

ARTICLE 8.

The parties realize the global character of the Chernobyl catastrophe and pledge themselves to unite and coordinate their efforts in minimizing and overcoming its consequences.

To this purpose they have decided to conclude a special agreement that will take into consideration the gravity of the consequences of this catastrophe.

ARTICLE 9.

Disputes regarding the interpretation and application of the norms of this agreement are to be solved through negotiations between the appropriate organs and when necessary at the level of heads of governments and states.

ARTICLE 10.

Each of the high-contracting parties reserves the right to suspend the validity of the present agreement or its individual articles after informing the parties to the agreement of this fact one year in advance.

The clauses of the present agreement may be added or amended by common consent of the contracting parties.

ARTICLE 11.

From the moment the present agreement is signed, the norms of third states, including the former USSR, are not permitted to be implemented on the territories of the signatory states.

ARTICLE 12.

The high-contracting parties guarantee the fulfillment of the international obligations binding upon them from the treaties and agreements of the former USSR.

ARTICLE 13.

The present agreement does not affect the obligations of the high-contracting parties with regard to third states.

The present agreement is open to all member states of the former USSR to join, as well as to other states that share the goals and principles of the present agreement.

ARTICLE 14.

The city of Minsk is the official location of the coordinating bodies of the Commonwealth.

The activities of bodies of the former USSR are discontinued on the territories of the member states of the Commonwealth.

Executed in the city of Minsk on 8 December 1991 in three copies each in the Belarussian, Russian, and Ukrainian languages, the three texts being of equal validity.

[Signed] For the Republic of Belarus: S. Shushkevich, V. Kebich

For the RSFSR: B. Yeltsin, G. Burbulis

For the Ukraine: L. Kravchuk, V. Fokin

Republics To Coordinate Economic Policies

OW0912155091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The governments of Belorussia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine have agreed to coordinate their economic policies.

The statement signed by the first vice-premier of Russia Gennady Burbulis, the head of the Belorussian Government Vyacheslav Kebich and Ukrainian Premier Vitold Fokin, explains the intention to conduct coordinated radical economic reforms and "to refrain from any actions which would economically damage the other."

The sides have agreed on a ten-day period to decide on financial expenditures for defense and the liquidation of the remains of the Chernobyl disaster. They have agreed to develop a plan in December to realize inter-state economic agreements.

The leaders have decided to have accounts and economic relations on a ruble basis, and to introduce their own currencies only on the principles of special agreements, guaranteeing the rights of observers in the economic interests of all sides. They have further agreed to conclude an inter-bank agreement for limiting emissions, and to take simultaneous measures to reduce the budget deficit. Policies to free prices and with regard to social welfare will also be coordinated.

The sides have decided to coordinate foreign economic activities, customs policies and to guarantee free transit.

They intend to conclude a special agreement on regulating the debts of former Union enterprises, and also plan to urge the parliaments of their republics to coordinate a value added tax.

Commonwealth Seen as Preventing 'Collapse'

PM0912193591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

["Commentary" by Vladimir Kuznechevskiy: "Belovezhskaya Forest Instead of Novo-Ogarevo"]

[Text] On Sunday, 8 December 1991, the leaders of the three Slav republics—Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine—signed a communique in the Belovezhskaya Forest creating a Commonwealth of Independent States. The document adopted says that the Soviet Union, founded in December 1922, has ceased to exist as a subject of international law, and that all laws of what was the USSR are no longer valid on the Commonwealth's territory, along with ordinances and resolutions adopted by the still operational Union legislative and executive organs of authority in Moscow. The text of the document indicates that the Commonwealth's founding fathers—Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich—recognize Moscow only as the capital of Russia. The city of Minsk, the capital of the courageous and freedom-loving Belorussian people—has been named as the new Commonwealth's organizational center. The Commonwealth's coordinating organs (and, in the future, perhaps even its executive and legislative organs) will be formed here.

It is not yet time to produce an in-depth analysis of what has happened, but some things can be said today. To all appearances, the Minsk communique, on the one hand, completes the process of the USSR's disintegration, which has frightened both the whole world and us ourselves, and puts an end to the state of uncertainty in our lives. On the other hand, it opens the way to new, most likely difficult but constructive talks on economic and political relations, both within the core of the new Commonwealth and with those states that wish (or will be forced?) to join it.

More than 80 percent of the former USSR's population and economic and military potential was united in the Belovezhskaya Forest, and one may assume that the Commonwealth—the core of which is the Slav race—not only may put an end to the uncontrolled collapse of the former Soviet empire, but also may open up the real prospect (provided that Kazakhstan joins it) of tight control over the country's nuclear potential. Real conditions are emerging for a move away from talk to practical steps to implement economic reform on the territory of the Commonwealth and those states that decide to join it.

It goes without saying that this event will put an end to President Gorbachev's proposal to create a Union of Sovereign States, in accordance with which the centralized political structures would be preserved.

I think that the Minsk communique also may put an end to the gloomy forecasts about the possibility of an impending military coup in the USSR, since there is finally a chance of moving away from the menacing collapse of the USSR to the civilized, nonviolent process of escaping from the profound political crisis. The Commonwealth of equals is taking a historic path.

Belarus

Chairman Shushkevich Discusses Commonwealth

LD0912202991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Statement by Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet, to unidentified Central Television correspondent in Minsk on 9 December—recorded]

[Text] We understand it is impossible to build a new union without casting off structures that are neither logical nor necessary and that impose burdens on people. In my opinion, however, this is not understood by everyone, and so the exercises—or more correctly I would say the abbreviations or whatever else you like—change, but there are no business-like steps forward. We came to the conclusion that we had to sort out the concept of the kind of union we are capable of building. I tell you, I traveled to this conference, and it seemed to me that it would no doubt be impossible to find an option in keeping with the Ukrainian referendum, the expression of the will of the Ukrainian people, but it seems that an option does exist, it suits us, and it shows us how we should live in the future. This option has been found; therefore everything has been formulated.

Of course, implementation is not a simple matter. In the first place, one has to convince oneself that it is good. We have convinced ourselves of this, and I personally am convinced that I am acting in the interests of Belarus, in the interests of the Belarus people, and all the others are convinced that this does not contradict the interests of the Ukraine or Russia or of all those who might join us. For we have republics that were soviet socialist republics, but that now feel they were forced to become subjects of the federation. However, we say they can continue to share the same opinion, and we invite them to join a different union, a different one, a commonwealth of independent states. The way is open for them.

Notes 'No Obstacles' To Others Joining

LD0912164491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1556 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By BELTA correspondents Yevgeniy Gorelik and Aleksandr Kryzhanovskiy]

[Text] Minsk, 9 Dec (TASS)—"We must find a worthy variant to ensure that in obtaining genuine sovereignty we do not let borders disunite us; we must pursue an independent policy, but one coordinated with our neighbors," commented Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet, on the results of his 36 hours of talks with the presidents of Russia and Ukraine.

In an interview with the BELTA correspondents, he said that the leaders of the three republics "found a variant of the new union of republics acceptable for all—without borders for citizens."

The agreement, he stressed, "envisages preserving a single armed forces, a single military and strategic space—something which is of particular concern to our foreign partners in nuclear restraint and arms reduction."

Stanislav Shushkevich drew attention to the fact that allegations that the new union is a purely Slavic one are incorrect. "There are no obstacles to other non-Slav republics entering it," he declared. "We assume that states which were not subjects of the former USSR can also join it," the head of parliament added. "We think there is a point in the Baltic republics getting a grasp of our agreement. It seems to me that it offers realistic ways to good-neighborly relations and fruitful interaction," he commented.

Stanisilav Shushkevich said that before the end of 1992 none of the signatories to the agreement "has any intention of introducing its own currency."

Official Cites Agreement on Price Increases

LD0912153291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] The signing of an economic agreement among the members of the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States came at a moment when it looked as though they were all ready to go away emptyhanded. This was stated in a television interview by Vyacheslav Kebich, chairman of the Belarussian Council of Ministers.

He said that the issue bothering all the Belarussian people—that of price increases to begin on 16 December—was settled unexpectedly. He explained that on 10 December, his first deputy, Mikhail Myasnikovich, will sign an agreement in Moscow with Russian state leaders that will do away with a specific date for price increases. The freeing of prices will take place gradually, when all members of the commonwealth are ready.

Main Points of New Constitution Summarized

PM1012114591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Nikolay Matukovskiy report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Constitution To Be Discussed"]

[Text] Minsk—The new constitution of the Republic of Belarus has been published.

Compared with the past constitution, the new one will be democratic and progressive. It envisages that republic and local referendums will be held by equal, direct, and secret ballot on the most important problems affecting the republic's life. Unlike the current one, the Supreme Soviet will comprise 160 professional deputies, who will not be entitled to occupy any other post during their work in parliament. The number of parliamentarians is thus halved.

The republic's new constitution envisages a presidential form of government. The president will be elected by direct, secret ballot of all the people. The new constitution regards people as the highest value of society and state. Belarussian will be the state language, but all citizens are ensured the right to use their native language.

Moldova

Snegur Backers Oppose Unification With Romania

LD0912172991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1130 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] The results of the Moldova presidential elections held on 8 December and the impressive victory of Mircea Snegur in them has met with the approval of the public at large in the republic.

According to preliminary data, 1,946,000 voters went to polling stations, or 82.9 percent of those registered. The number of those who voted for Mircea Snegur was 1,910,000, which is 98.2 percent of those who took part.

A TASS correspondent carried out a telephone poll of 50 inhabitants of different nationalities of the Moldovan capital and the cities of Belts, Kakhul, and Soroka. They were asked: Why did you vote for Mircea Snegur? The absolute majority of those polled stated in one form or another: In voting for Snegur we voted for the independence of Moldova and voted against the politics of the right wing of the Popular Front headed by former Prime Minister Mircea Druk, who favours Moldova's unification with Romania.

In actual fact, it can be said without fear of being wrong that the supporters of Mircea Druk in Moldova number less than 35,000 of a population of 4,350,000. The latter is the number of the electorate who voted against Mircea Snegur.

General Staff Claims No Part in Dnestr Military

OW0912144391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an interviev for Moldova's radio the USSR General Staff distanced itself from the military acting in the Dnestr region. The Moldovans charge the 14th Army stationed there with having organized resistance to Sunday's [8 December] elections of Moldova's president.

According to the local interior ministry, on the eve of elections a military helicopter flew over the village of Strasheny, for one, dropping leaflets that called for boycotting presidential elections. The same day outside the Dubossary power plant a group of military men surrounded, after shots into the air, a car belonging to the local police and disarmed 5 policemen. [sentence as received] On the election day the military prevented an electoral commission on its way from Bendery to the village of Gyska on the left bank from reaching its destination.

Moldova's Interior Ministry asserts that 64 mobile armed groups were formed on the left bank to block the process of elections.

Cl.-General Broneslav Omelichev, first deputy chief of the USSR Defence Ministry's General Staff, has said that Army regulars are not involved in the affairs of armed units in the Dnestr region. One must not identify armed men in military uniforms with Army regulars, the cl.-general stressed.

The consent of the 14th Army commander based in Tiraspol to head the security council of the Dnestr republic that Moldova's parliament refuses to recognize was news to the leadership of the Defence Ministry. According to Omelichev, the 14th Army commander Lt.-General Yakovlev has been ordered to come to Moscow. On Monday [9 December] a delegation of the defence ministry flew to Tiraspol on a fact-finding mission.

Reunification Council Urges Troop Withdrawal

OW1012043691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The National Reunification Council (NRC) involving parliamentarians from Moldova and Romania urged the Romanian Government Monday [9 December] to promote the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Moldova with the help of the international community. The NRC's statement says that "these troops have repeatedly perpetrated acts of aggression against peaceful civilians, thereby threatening a bloodshed." The NRC realizes that the two artificially created states on Romanian territory can no longer exist, the statement notes. It urges the governments of Moldova and Romania to look for "acceptable ways of restoring Romania's historical borders."

Ukraine

Kravchuk Discusses Creation of Commonwealth

LD0912185191 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1700 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By correspondent Vladimir Sokolov on news conference given by Ukraine President Leonid Kravchuk in Kiev on 9 December]

[Text] Leonid Kravchuk first stated: We did not set ourselves the task just of creating a Slavonic community. Because the situation has become extremely complicated and the attempts of the center to revive the former structures are both unrealistic and politically even harmful, we set the task of creating a Commonwealth of Independent States, without considering any kind of national or other features.

Having acquainted journalists with the documents adopted in Belarus, Leonid Kravchuk reported that they have all been sent not only to the former republics of the Union, including the Baltic republics, but also to the majority of countries in the world.

During discussion of these documents, he reported, talks were held with Gorbachev, Nazarbayev, Shaposhnikov, and even President Bush.

The adopted agreement, he added, is open not only to other sovereign states of the former Union to join, but also to other countries.

Leonid Kravchuk gave a very critical appraisal of yesterday's television interview by Mikhail Gorbachev to Ukrainian Television, especially the section on national problems which, according to Kravchuk, Gorbachev treats wrongly, at least as far as Ukraine is concerned; and also on the question of the transition to the market, which is simply not laid down in the proposed draft of a Union treaty.

As regards Mikhail Gorbachev's future actions in the situation which has taken shape, Leonid Kravchuk proposed that it would be most correct to convene a Union Congress of People's Deputies at which all questions should be completely resolved.

On the place of Mikhail Gorbachev himself in the new structure of the agreement of independent states, Kravchuk answered briefly: That is not our concern.

Notes Constitutional Documents

LD0912170191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1630 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By BELTA correspondents Yakov Alekseychik and Vladimir Glod]

[Text] Minsk, 9 Dec (TASS)—"The leaders of the three sovereign republics acted in accordance with the constitutions of our states and with our powers," President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine declared, evaluating the documents signed yesterday in Minsk by Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, including an agreement on a Commonwealth of Independent States.

The citizens of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk said in an interview with the BELTA correspondents, were expecting that the correct wording of an agreement would be found. "Rumors that the Ukraine is proceeding from separatist positions were the fruit of distorted information," he added.

"We opposed only one factor—that there would be a state over us that would govern us. The Ukraine has always been in favor of integration. Today the three states used their constitutional rights and gave an example of such integration, which is akin to the forms already existing in Europe. In so doing, we are open to all those who share our goals and principles," the president of Ukraine said in conclusion.

Says Kazakhstan, Baltics, May Join

LD0912212691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 9 Dec 91

["TV Inform" feature]

[Text] In Kiev, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk met with journalists.

[Correspondent Lyaskalo] For the first time journalists accredited in Kiev heard from his lips the full text of the statement of the leaders of the three states and the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He stressed that this document meets all international legal norms as well as those of the Ukrainian declaration of independence. The Ukrainian president, Kravchuk added, also acted in line with the latest decisions of the Ukrainian Supreme Council, and this was, perhaps, the first step that has proven the advantage of presidential executive power. This most important document was signed quickly, without additional consultations and protracted discussions.

Assessing the atmosphere of the talks, Kravchuk noted the unanimity of the participants, especially in the final stage when everything was decided smoothly. Replying to a question on who might join the new commonwealth, Kravchuk named Kazakhstan, primarily, then the Baltic countries; he did not rule out Bulgaria and or other country in Europe. I think, he said, that whoever joins us will not regret it.

Reveals New Missile Command System

LD0912190191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1822 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Aleksandr Litvinov]

[Text] Kiev, 9 Dec (TASS)—A news conference given by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk today was devoted to the agreement on a Commonwealth of Independent States of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia.

Acquainting journalists with the document, Leonid Kravchuk drew particular attention to the fact that the agreement does not envisage the creation of unified structures of administration, with the exception of a collective command of strategic forces.

The Ukrainian president explained that previously the president of the USSR has had the launch button at his disposal, but now a different system has been created. Now, in order for missiles to be launched, three buttons must be pressed simultaneously, each of which is under the control of one of the members of the Commonwealth. If one of them should press it, the launch will not take place: only three, and three simultaneously.

Speaking about extending the Commonwealth, Leonid Kravchuk said that, in his opinion, Kazakhstan will be joining it, possibly the Baltic countries, and also certain countries of the former CEMA, in particular Bulgaria.

Replying to a question as to what Ukraine is doing in reply to Mikhail Gorbachev's request for additional supplies of food to Moscow, Leonid Kravchuk noted that Ukraine in December will be sending an additional 52,000 tonnes of sugar, over 1,500 tonnes of vegetable oil, and 2,000 tonnes of meat and meat products.

Explains Policies

LD0812142691 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 6 Dec 91

[Text] The gala sitting of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet dedicated to the results of the all-Ukrainian referendum and the election of the president of Ukraine took place yesterday. Our correspondent, Vasyl Byrzov, reports:

[Begin recording] [Byrzov] This is probably the first time that a gala sitting of our parliament is dedicated not to yet another anniversary but to the present historic moment—the consecration of the revival of Ukrainian statehood. Our freedom-loving people have once again confirmed their lifelong aspiration through the referendum. Ivan Stepanovych Plyushch noted when opening the Supreme Soviet meeting that now we must do everything for the Ukraine to flourish and to make its people happy. Vitaliy Fedorovych Boyko, chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, reported on the results of the referendum and the election. Then a solemn inauguration of the president of Ukraine took place. Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk solemnly took the oath of allegiance to the people of Ukraine. Writer Oles Honchar, Poltava oblast milkmaid Halyna Syvolap, serviceman Oleksandr Haydamaka, and Leonid Smolyakov, the plenipotentiary representative of Russia in Ukraine who read out a congratulatory telegram from the Russian president to the president of Ukraine, spoke warm words of congratulations from the Supreme Soviet rostrum. Then Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk made a speech. He noted key points in domestic and external policy. Here are some principal points of the president's speech:

[Kravchuk] Our entire policy will be determined by the fact that Ukraine is a full-blooded and independent state with full rights. On its territory the constitution and laws of Ukraine are valid exclusively. In external relations it is a subject with equal rights. It is an open democratic state accepting the rule of law in which the people are the sole source of state power and a human being is of the highest value. We will be building a socially orientated economy working for individuals and not at the expense of individuals, and giving a person everything for a normal and civilized life. Our very first steps in the economic sphere will be directed at carrying out economic reforms that are profound, consistent, and coordinated; creating a qualitatively new mixed economy; establishing the internal market of Ukraine as an independent state; and integrating its economy with the economy of the former Union states and into the European and world economic order.

In the economic sphere the main thing is to give property to a person, to make him a boss. All forms of property now known to civilized mankind will be juridically equal on the territory of Ukraine. Land will belong to those who till it. We will revive Ukrainian villages and make land the mother of wealth and people who live on this land free people. The destatization and privatization of property will create equal conditions of managing for all enterprises and businessmen: the state, private, lease, cooperative, individual ones and also foreign investors. A businessman will become the basis of the economy, its sole and compelling force. We will lift all restrictions for the commercial activity of state enterprises both in the internal and external markets. We will leave them a larger proportion of their currency proceedings. We will introduce a system for supporting private enterprise and entrepreneurs on the state level. The state will give up its production functions and hand them over directly to entrepreneurs. It will move from tough managing to regulating the economy. State structures of economic management will be simple, effective, cheap, and built according to the functions and purposes principle [funktsionalno-tsilyovyy pryntsyp] with broad development of territorial and economic self-governing. We will go to the lengths of making resolute structural changes, including the conversion of defense enterprises and the creation of new economic structures capable of providing the well-being and sufficient income for people.

The creation of the national economy requires introduction of a national monetary unit. We will make this transition in a way such that no one loses his honestly earned savings. Any administrative restrictions as regards the population's income are lifted. Everything earned by honest work should belong to a person and cannot be taken away by the state. A person has the right to dispose of his income independently. For those unable to provide themselves with a living wage, the state will create an effective system of social guarantees and protection. We will be building an open economy where the broad attraction of foreign capital, technology, and intellect is combined with effective protection of the national market and national economic interests. Mechanisms for protecting foreign capital will be put into operation and equal conditions for running businesses will be created for Ukrainian and foreign entrepreneurs.

What are the main principles of the policy in the sphere of developing the state? We will be building a state that is sovereign and self-governed, independent and open, democratic and legal. One of the urgent tasks at present is strengthening executive power and developing self-government in the localities. Resolute measures will be taken immediately in order to place under our strict control the customs and other structures, through which the national wealth of Ukraine flows outside of the republic's borders as if soaking into the sand. We will combat an uncompromising struggle against such evil as profiteering, corruption, and organized crime, which at present have turned into real trouble for our society. The law and only the law must become a norm of life and behavior for our people and every citizen. The energy of the presidential power will also be directed at completion of the process of spiritual self-determination of the Ukrainian people. All nationalities will have equal opportunities and complete freedom for developing their languages and cultures.

Now about foreign policy: It will be based on such grounds as a principled nature, foresight, and pragmatism. Its main goal is to provide for national interests of Ukraine, to defend rights and interests of its citizens abroad, and to create favorable conditions for socioeconomic development of our state. Unconditional recognition of the principles and norms of the international law will be the beginning and the end in our external economic actions. The territorial integrity of states and inviolability of their borders is one of the main principles of international coexistance. The Ukraine does not have territorial claims to any of its neighbors and does not recognize any claims with regard to itself.

We say again and again: The Ukraine intends to become a non-nuclear and neutral state in the future. We consider the nuclear weapon of the former Union on our territory as that which is located on it temporarily. Our goal is to completely liquidate all nuclear weapons on the territory of the Ukraine and to transform the Ukraine into a non-nuclear zone. The Ukraine confirms its international commitments and declares its legal succession as regards all treaties and agreements of the former Union that correspond to general human norms and do not contradict the fundamental interests of the Ukrainian people. This also concerns the justly established share of our foreign assets and debts.

The Ukraine is a European state and our foreign policy priorities are determined by this fact. Apart from Europe we are interested in establishing and developing relations with states where there is a considerable stratum of Ukrainian immigrants, especially the United States and Canada. We also have interest in the developed Asiatic countries, countries of the Near East, and others. It is understandable that we are especially interested in good relations with all republics of the former Union, especially Russia.

[Byrzov] The president concluded his speech with the words: The Ukraine is alive; it rose from its knees and made the first step toward the general human civilization. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Supreme Soviet Chairman Holds News Conference

LD0912133591 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 7 Dec 91

["Excerpts" of news conference with Ivan Stepanovych Plyushch, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine, on 6 December; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent Serhiy Sysyun] At the news conference, Ivan Stepanovych Plyushch was open for talks, witty, and he also showed wisdom. However, time was found both for jokes and for very serious things and issues. For instance, whether the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine would be able to stand in opposition to the president of Ukraine when it is necessary. The answer was: I always was and will be in the opposition, but in a sound and constructive opposition.

Journalists showed interest in everything: in the activity of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, local government bodies, and the work of the Ukrainian parliament. I want to present to you with only three interesting and topical, in my view, questions and answers.

[STERN correspondent, in Russian] [name indistinct], from the German STERN magazine. Here are two brief questions: First, do you think the Supreme Soviet will ratify the Economic Community Treaty? And, second, what part of the USSR's external debts will the state of Ukraine assume responsibility for, which means repay?

[Plyushch, in Russian] I will start with the second question. You see, when we stated firmly that we were prepared to sit at the negotiating table in order to establish a proportion of the union's debts to those of other states—then these debts amounted to $50 billion. We have been ignored for nine months already. And these debts grew to $86 billion over this period of time. And if this is going to continue in the same way ... [changes thought] we immediately raised this issue in March, then in August and in November, and again they said to us: the centralized committee for foodstuffs, again centralized and again centralized [as heard]. And we found out that these debts are now reaching the figure of $100 billion—to service this debt [as heard].

So I am afraid that there will be a line at which we will simply be unable to participate in dividing these debts, because they are appearing without us knowing about them. I have the following position: we stated that (?the starting point should be) as matters stood on 1 September. Because the Act of Independence was adopted on 24 August, and we said then on all levels that we did not want to take credits without knowing who the creditors are [bezadresnyye kredity], we do not want any aid without knowing who it comes from. Therefore, we are prepared to assume responsibility for debts as matters stood on 1 September. However, at the same time, with assets. Let them be unreal [as heard], but someone also owes the former Union as matters stood on 1 September.

Now about the first question on the economic agreement. I do not think the Supreme Soviet can be prepared to sign it in its present form. Two presidents of Russia and Ukraine and the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus—he is the highest-ranking person there at present—are meeting tomorrow. And I think they will start working out a new form of the economic community, a new form. And such form is necessary.

[Correspondent from the VOICE OF UKRAINE] Svitlana [last name indistinct], the VOICE OF UKRAINE. Ivan Stepanovych, I have the following question: When you returned from Moscow, where you said that the Ukraine does not accept ultimatums, when we talked about Gorbachev, you said that he was the only person who could now be there, and there is no alternative [as heard]. However, this only person is now saying that there are some measures possible which he could take to make the Ukraine sign the Union treaty. You probably know him better than all of us here—so could you say what are these possible measures?

[Plyushch] I would not say that I know him very well. I treat and treated him with great respect as a good man. I really treat Mikhail Sergeyevich with respect. And when we arrived there last time and, well, I will not tell a long story about how this entire procedure was played out, and then there was a sort of an introductory part and Gorbachev says, what have you done there with all these military affairs? Do you want me to adopt a decree and abolish all this business? I said to him: Mikhail Sergeyevich, you are surprising me, you see. [laughter from audience] What decree? What country's decree? Then why have I come here at all? And, you know, he changed his tone and that was it, there were no decrees, you see? Therefore, I am for Mikhail Sergeyevich, in the good sense of this, as he is just the person with whom it is possible to talk and carry on a discussion, a dialogue, and so forth. And this already is very much for a politicial and, even more so, for this [as heard]. And what Mikhail Sergeyevich says, it seems to me that recently he has been explaining what his team has been preparing for him. You see, they somehow apparently know how to persuade him that not everything is lost yet.

Crimean Deputies Want Review of 1954 Act

LD0712172391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1000 GMT 7 Dec 91

["New Wave" feature]

[Text] Forty Supreme Soviet people's deputies from the Crimean Autonomous Republic sent a letter to USSR President Gorbachev asking him to reexamine the 1954 act, which annexed Crimea to Ukraine. INTERFAX was informed about it by Mikhail Astafyev, people's deputy from Russia.

PRAVDA Comments on Independence, West

PM0912103191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 4 Dec 91 p 5

[Political observer Tomas Kolesnichenko article under the rubric "My Opinion": "The West Is Seeking, But It Is for Us To Decide"]

[Text] You do not have to be a clairvoyant to imagine what is happening now behind the blinds of the offices of the West's "think tanks." To put it bluntly, all the previous theories and schemes connected with the recent past are being consigned to the archives there. The new thinking, relations with the Union (USSR or USS [Union of Sovereign States]—it does not matter), the upheavals in the center's relations with the republics, the clashes between Gorbachev and Yeltsin and between Bush and Gorbachev, nuclear parity between the great powers, and so on and so forth—all this is now part of history.

I am also sure that the passions surrounding Ukraine's independence will very soon die down, and it will stop being the latest sensation. The appearance on the map of Europe of a new state the size of France is a historic reality. Sooner or later such realities have to be recognized. Incidentally, it will be most difficult of all for us who have not yet gotten used to shock therapy. Ukraine's break with Russia—with Russia, not the USSR—will give us a shock which does not bear comparison even with the breakup of the British Empire, which, as we know, was not easy for the British. But they survived. We too will survive although it seems at the moment that we are being skinned alive.

But then who said that this is a break? There are after all, as it is now our wont to say, civilized forms of joint existence. Call them what you will—confederation, community, commonwealth—what is important is their essence. Which is not to get bogged down in chaos, but on the contrary to create new mutually advantageous forms of cooperation among the former USSR republics and find a way out of the crisis.

Such forms of cooperation do exist. But are we, we ourselves, ready for them? It is this very question that the Western "think tanks" are discussing at present. Just yesterday they were trying to convince, exhort, and persuade us—do not destroy the Union, pool your efforts. But this sounded to us just like the CPSU Central Committee slogans for an anniversary of the October Revolution. We are again being called on now to avoid an economic catastrophe, a split, but this is just empty talk like: "Former USSR republics, pool your efforts in the struggle for a single economic area!"

And it occurs to few people that it is not they but we who need this most of all. "They" need one thing to ensure that a civil war does not start in the former USSR, for nuclear weapons—tens of thousands of warheads, each at least equivalent to a Hiroshima—exist in various republics.

Now the West has fallen into a trap. History has played a malicious joke on it. It spent trillions of dollars in the struggle against the "Soviet threat," and you might say that it has been victorious. There is no Soviet threat, as there is no USSR. But an even more terrible threat has developed. As a result of the USSR's "Croatization," Russian, Ukrainian, and Kazakh threats have appeared... So the West is feverishly searching for a new strategy, a new approach to the former USSR. There is no need to feel aggrieved with anybody. Washington's "sentimental relations" with Moscow are now a thing of the past. History has once more proved the veracity of the remark that states have neither permanent enemies nor permanent friends, but only permanent interests. The West's stake on the republics in no way signifies a betrayal of the center or a complete turnaround in policy by Washington, say.

The United States is searching for "civilized" methods of contact with the Ukraine. Accustomed to its own leaders' election campaigns, it is turning a blind eye to statements made before the actual day when the new president occupies his office. Therefore after that day it is expecting from Kravchuk a rational policy based not on breaking the vitally necessary ties with Moscow, but on developing everything constructive and mutually advantageous.

The United States hopes that the Ukrainian president's policies will differ significantly from those he proclaimed in the struggle for the presidency to get extra votes from the electorate. Washington would like, for example, to receive from Kiev guarantees of the observance of the Helsinki accords, including human rights, and the rights of national minorities, a promise not to attempt to change borders and to carry out the USSR's commitments under the treaties on reducing armed forces in Europe and nuclear weapons, a refusal to use and develop chemical and biological weapons, and, finally, consent to retain unified command over nuclear weapons.

The expectations are natural and—except for the last one, against which there is a question mark—they are entirely acceptable to the Ukraine. Kiev will of course give all the necessary assurances. And the Ukraine is of course not going to threaten the United States. But what if "tomorrow," for example, a dispute arises between the Ukraine and Russia over the Crimea? What will the worth of all these statements be if this conflict takes uncontrollable forms, bearing in mind that there are warheads on Ukrainian and Russian soil? The situation is, of course, a hypothetical one. God forbid that this should ever arise. But if nationalism gains the upper hand in relations among the sovereign states which constituted the former USSR, a direct threat to peace will emanate one way or another from the one-sixth of the world's land mass, which only recently we proudly called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

There are many potential and smoldering disputes between the republics which were part of the USSR. And you need the skill of a mine specialist crossing a minefield in order to avoid them.

This is of course our own internal problem. But a lot also depends on the West.

It will be a tragedy if the Washington, London, Paris, and Bonn "think tanks" come to the conclusion that the collapsing Soviet Union requires a "firm hand" from outside. But such attitudes can already be seen. You can hear words like "tutelage," "control," and "U.N. troops" in experts' pronouncements. Yes, all these words have already been said. And this approach is not only a blow to our national pride, but an exacerbation of the situation which has developed in the former Soviet Union. If only because it provokes, particularly against the background of economic collapse, the appearance of this "firm hand," or, to put it another way, dictatorship in our country.

If you set up a hierarchy of priorities, the problem of economics stands in first place in the West's foreign policy. No new world order is possible in the event of an economic crash in the former USSR. And even those in the United States who used to be more vocal than the rest in demanding that Washington increase military expenditure understand this.

Take, for example, Senator Nunn, who is now advocating that some of the Pentagon's expenditure be channeled into aid for our country in order to avert its complete economic collapse. And this collapse is no longer an assumption but a very real danger.

Judge for yourselves. In the "Great Depression's" most difficult days the economic recession in the United States was 8 percent. And this was a national catastrophe. This year there is a recession of 0.6 percent in the United States, and the country is virtually in shock. But in our country the recession has reached 10-25 percent and its end is not in sight.

The West must make a decision which is difficult for it. A rich person shares with others only when his personal well-being depends on this. But that moment has arrived. Incidentally, after the war the United States did not grudge giving 2 percent of GNP in aid to Europe. Today such a figure could resolve many problems in our country.

You might ask: Are democracy, nationalism, and aid interlinked? Yes, they are. I am sure that when the peoples of the Soviet Union's republics vote overwhelmingly for independence, they are voting first and foremost not for an interethnic split but for a break with the bureaucratic center, which is incapable of organizing normal human life or of boosting economic activity and performance. They think that once they have shaken off the center's fetters, they will be able to make a dash to prosperity. But this can be done not by isolating themselves from each other, but, on the contrary, by utilizing the new free national development of each republic for common purposes.

To be concise, the West is seeking, but it is for us to decide.

Problems Raised by Military Ambitions Viewed

PM0912165991 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 7 Dec 91 p 1

[A. Krayniy report: "Friendship Is One Thing, But Guns Are Something Else"]

[Text] I have already spoken about the three military districts and one (Black Sea) fleet within the Ukraine. I tried to show that maintaining an army of 400,000-500,000 soldiers constitutes an intolerable burden for the taxpayers, that a ticket to the nuclear club will hardly be issued in return for the splendid and understandable desire for independence.

Regrettably, my words haven't stopped anyone yet. The Ukraine is starting to set up its own army in practice. There are already theoretical treatises. Here, for instance, is what Colonel S. Mikhalchuk, addressing the international conference "Principles of Sovereign States' National Security" in Kiev at the beginning of October, reckons: "The nature of the military doctrine enables it to have armed forces of... 400,000-500,000 men. Preference must be given to the air force and air defense forces... because the main operations in contemporary warfare are moving away from ground warfare to the air." The colonel suggests mixed staffing for the Ukrainian army. By and large everything seems well-ordered and logical if you forget that it is the Ukraine we are talking about. But you cannot forget that, and it is hard to get accustomed to the idea of sovereignty for the second-biggest Slav republic. And the author of this report, whose "forefathers' burial places" are now abroad, also finds this hard.

But this is being emotional. Taking the logical view, I would note that the Ukraine is perhaps the only one of the republics now seceding (from whom?) capable of setting up its own army within a short period. Not for fun, but for real.

It has colossal manpower resources, a wealth of natural resources, and accord—the majority of Russians did after all also vote for independence... Nor should we forget that roughly half of the officers in the Soviet Army, particularly in the middle echelon, are Ukrainians, and even if half of them express a desire to serve "mother Ukraine," that is quite enough for starters.

What will happen to the Russian Navy, because neither Sevastopol nor the Black Sea can be described as Ukrainian under any circumstances? I am afraid that that will come: Some things have been brought back to Russia—it seems that the Admiral Kuznetsov has already passed Gibraltar—but the majority of the ground and naval equipment will remain in the Ukraine. What will happen to it? What lies in store for the officers, warrant officers, and their families?

In my view there are only two possible options for the USSR Armed Forces property. The first is a temporary agreement on the Soviet military contingent's staying on the republic's territory, and a gradual, evolutionary transition for the three districts and the fleet to real Ukrainian authority. The second involves another radical redistribution of property.

Armenia

Republic To Discuss Joining New Commonwealth

LD0912185691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1826 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By correspondent Tigran Liloyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 9 Dec (TASS)—Armenia fully supports the initiative by the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and Belarus and is ready to discuss seriously the matter of joining the commonwealth of independent states. This is said in a statement by the republic's president, Levon Ter-Petrosyan, issued here today. "We view the signing by the three Slav republics of the agreement setting up the commonwealth as a historic step towards a cardinal renewal of relations among the former Union republics based on the principles of international law, toward the creation of a reliable system of collective security, and toward equitable economic cooperation and the full safeguarding of human rights and those of national minorities and autonomous formations," the document stresses.

The Armenian president recalls the republic's position regarding participation in all constructive processes taking place within the framework of the former Union.

First Defense Forces Draftees Sworn In

PM0912105191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Sergey Bablumyan report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Armenia: First Steps Toward Own Army"]

[Text] Yerevan—Recruits starting service in the republic defense forces have sworn an oath of allegiance to Armenian independence on Freedom Square in Yerevan.

These first military subunits, staffed by young men of draft age, are subordinate to the Armenian Ministry of Internal Affairs. Their basic purpose is to defend the borders and safeguard public order.

As far as the creation of a truly professional army is concerned, as Major General Artush Arutyunyan, republic military commissar, has stated, Armenia is only taking its first steps in this direction and it will have to overcome very many difficulties.

Azerbaijan

Republic Declares Karabakh Resolution Invalid

OW0912143991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Azerbaijan's national council has declared that the resolution on Nagorno Karabakh adopted by the USSR State Council on November 27 is viewed by Azerbaijan as a recommendation and has no legal force. The USSR State Council appealed to the parliaments of Azerbaijan and Armenia to cancel all their acts altering Nagorno Karabakh's legal status, restore constitutional order in the autonomous region, take steps aimed at ensuring a ceasefire and removing all illegal armed units from the zone of the conflict and create a security strip in tho sectors along the border between the two republics where tensions are the highest.

Nagorno-Karabakh To Vote for Independence

OW1012000691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A referendum will be held in Nagorno-Karabakh Tuesday [10 December] to find out whether the people want Karabakh to be an independent republic.

According to IF's [INTERFAX] reporter, nearly 80 polling stations and an operational headquarters have been set up in Nagorno-Karabakh in preparation for the referendum. The headquarters will take care, among other things, of the personal integrity of observers.

Karabakhi residents who for various reasons may find themselves in Armenia on December 10 will be invited to polling stations organized specially for the purpose in Yerevan, Razdan, Masis, Kirovakan, Kapan and other Armenian cities and district centers.

The referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh will be monitored by nearly 40 observers from various ex-Soviet republics, as well as from foreign countries.

UN Appeal Seeks End to Armenian 'Crimes'

NC0612171991 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 0545 GMT 4 Dec 91

[From the republican press review]

[Text] The newspaper KHAYAT today published an appeal by the Azerbaijan Republic Supreme Soviet to the United Nations and the governments in the world. The appeal said:

In view of the right of the Azerbaijani people to freely determine their own future, the Azerbaijan Republic Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution on 30 August 1991 restoring the Azerbaijan's independence. The Supreme Soviet endorsed a constitutional act on Azerbaijani independence on 18 October 1991. The Supreme Soviet appeals to you to adhere to the norms of international law and support us on the question of the inviolability of borders and the territorial integrity of sovereign countries, which is a matter of principle, condemn the aggressive actions of the Armenian Republic, and help the Azerbaijan Republic end the ferocious crimes committed on Azerbaijani soil by the brigands sent from Armenia.

One Killed, 14 Injured in Nagorno-Karabakh

LD0912224191 Moscow TASS in English 1844 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By AZERINFORM correspondent Sabir Mirzoyev]

[Text] Baku December 9 TASS—Heavy gunfire hit the Azeri settlement of Kiarkijakhan, Nagorno-Karabakh, killing one man and wounding fourteen, AZERINFORM reported.

Deputy chief executive officer of the Shusha district Mekhti Mekhtiyev said the settlement had been under fire from the direction of Khankendi (former Stepanakert) since Sunday [8 December] morning.

Militants from the Gadrut district opened fire on a group of Azerbaijan's Interior Ministry officials who were looking for 11 Azeri hostages seized the previous day from the village of Yukhary Divananylar in the Khanlar district.

A policeman and a local resident were wounded.

Passenger Helicopter Fired On

LD0612213691 Moscow TASS in English 1705 GMT 6 Dec 91

[By AZERINFORM correspondent Sabir Mirzoyev]

[Text] Agdam December 6 TASS—Fire was opened at a passenger helicopter which was en route from Agdam to Karadagly in this Caucasian republic today.

The crew succeeded in landing safely at Agdam airport despite numerous holes in the helicopter's tail. According to crew Commander Yuriy Pakhnev, the helicopter was fired at near the village of Karakend of the Martuni district, where a helicopter exploded on November 20, killing 22 passengers and crew.

Today, fire was opened at the aircraft from three points—the Armenian village of Karakend, the district centre of Martuni and the adjacent hills.

None of the crew members or passengers was hurt.

Official Released in Hostage Exchange

LD0912162191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Reports reaching the USSR Interior Ministry Internal Troops headquarters say that a senior assistant to the General Procurator of the Azerbaijan Republic, Sukyur Arzayev, who was taken hostage in mid-November, has been exchanged in Nagorno-Karabakh for a group of four Armenian hostages. [passage omitted]

Georgia

Leader Urges Compliance With Military Transfer

OW1012132791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1150 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Zviad Gamsakhurdia has urged the Georgian-based military to comply with the republican Supreme Soviet's resolution transferring all Soviet Army units and divisions on Georgian territory to the republic's jurisdiction. He warned that the entire responsibility for non-compliance with the resolution would be borne by the personnel and commanders.

In Mr. Gamsakhurdia's view, the increasingly vocal critical remarks addressed to the Georgian leadership by the military have been "part of a criminal campaign to fan the Soviet Army's hostility towards the governments of some ex-Soviet republics."

According to Gamsakhurdia, there are neither anti-Russian nor anti-Army sentiments in his republic.

Army Accuses Leaders of Urging Confrontation

LD0912191691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1749 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 9 Dec (TASS)—The command of the Transcaucasus Military District today accused the Georgian leadership of tacitly encouraging acts aimed at heightening confrontation with the Army. The reason for the accusation is the seizure in Tbilisi on 1 December of 10 tanks being transported for scrapping.

In a press statement issued today, Lieutenant General Yuriy Grekov, first deputy commander of the district's forces, stressed that the republic's president and leadership have been informed of the incident, but have failed to take any emergency or resolute measures. The commander believes that this inaction and indecisiveness are exacerbating the situation.

According to the Army's information, work currently is under way to repair and restore the seized tanks so they can be put to military use.

The district command has appealed to the Georgian people to help bring to an end unlawful acts directed against troops. It has demanded that the president and government of Georgia return the hardware. Otherwise, the statement stresses, the military reserves the right to take countermeasures, and all responsibility for the consequences will be placed upon the Georgian president.

Armed Guard Authorized for Military Transport

PM0912113191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Dec 91 p 1

[Report from PRAVDA-TASS-INTERFAX column under the general heading: "Newsbeat"]

[Text] The Transcaucasus Military District Press Center has circulated a message from the commander to the president and leadership of the Republic of Georgia and its people. It says, in particular, that armed attacks on servicemen and military installations with a view to seizing weapons and vehicles have increased in frequency in the republic. "In this situation," the commander notes, "the Transcaucasus Military District Military Council has adopted the only possible decision—all transportation and movements of motorized transport are to be accompanied by an armed guard, which is granted the right to use weapons in the event of an overt attack."

Military Convoy Attacked in Western Georgia

LD0912211291 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] A vehicle convoy of the Transcaucasus Military District traveling along the Tbilisi-Novorossiysk route in western Georgia was attacked today. An armored personnel carrier was seized, and a gunner operator injured. One of the attackers was seized; he was carrying an identity card of the Georgian National Guard.

Situation in South Ossetia Near 'Danger Line'

LD0712130991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1103 GMT 7 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 7 Dec (TASS)—Last night shots were fired at residential houses, public buildings, and utilities in Tskhinvali, the administrative center of South Ossetia, from the Georgian villages of Nikozi, Tamarasheni, Eredvi, and Achabeti. Seven people received bullet wounds. Shots were fired and explosions were heard in the villages of Znauri Rayon.

The situation in South Ossetia is near the danger line, stated Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic, in an appeal to the Ossetian people. Speaking on television 6 December, he said North Ossetia's Supreme Soviet urgently sent telegrams to Russian President Boris Yeltsin and to Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, demanding economic sanctions against the Republic of Georgia and the adoption of measures to prevent an armed conflict. Galazov stressed that the leadership of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic and of South Ossetia are receiving material and moral support only from Russia's Government. Numerous appeals to the country's leadership have not yielded positive results.

Following the lead taken by President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, the legislature of the Republic of Georgia declared the resumption of activities by the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of South Ossetia, its declaration of a state of emergency throughout the region, and general mobilization of the population to be unconstitutional. The Georgian prosecutor has been instructed to determine the degree of guilt of the South Ossetian leaders and to prosecute them.

According to reports from Tskhinvali, the situation there has been exacerbated during the last few days in that, during these winter days, a power blockade has been added to the harsh economic, transport, and food isolation that the town is already experiencing. Gas, electricity, and water supplies have been cut off; a main supply of heat has been damaged by sabotage. All alternate routes, by which humanitarian assistance has been reaching Tskhinvali from Vladikavkaz, have been cut by Georgian guerrillas. The main highway between Dzhava and Tskhinvali is also out of commission. Despite deploying armored vehicles, the military is unable to get through columns of vehicles with food, medicine, and fuel.

Meanwhile, guerrilla detachments continue to mass on the approaches to Tskhinvali. Armored vehicles, "Alazan" hail guns [gradoboynyye sistemy "Alazan"], and artillery are being brought in from the Gori highway; nearly 20,000 men are now concentrated there. There is every reason to assert that the Georgian side is preparing for a new assault on Tskhinvali.

Blockade, Famine Threaten Tskhinvali

LD1012001991 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] If the shelling of Tskhinvali and the villages of South Ossetia does not stop, then in the next few days a special purpose regiment from the internal troops of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs will enter the region. The Georgian side was informed of this by a representative of the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, INTERFAX reports.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent I. Tobolova] The tunnel under the Rokskiy pass is the border between the two Ossetias, North and South Ossetia. Today this is the only way to get to Tskhinvali, through the snow-bound pass which vehicles carrying freight cannot get through. The town, just as it was last winter, is in the grip of a blockade. No one can say how foodstuffs will be delivered. Complete famine has become a real threat.

Ossetian self-defense detachments are on duty on all the approaches to Tskhinvali round the clock; they have just been transformed into the national guard. Representatives of Georgian armed formations under the name of White Eagles, Black Panthers, and White Georges have demanded from the military command that the internal forces troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs should be withdrawn, and also that the Georgian armed formations should have the right to check the documents of officers and inspect their vehicles.

[Guardsman] If they want to unite then let them, but the land, I mean the land of the republic cannot be handed over to North Ossetia, since the latter is on the territory of the RSFSR at the present moment.

[Tobolova] The Ossetian side intends to defend to the end its right to self-determination—which the Georgian people have already taken advantage of.

[Unidentified man] Our boys are standing firm and they will stand firm. [end recording]

Further on Clashes

LD0912170991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1300 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Excerpts] The first self-defense detachments of South Ossetia have manned defense positions on the suburbs of Tskhinvali. Order No. 1 was issued today in the town by the commander-in-chief of the republic's armed forces. It states that all reserve officers, petty officers, sergeants, and privates should report to the headquarters of the commander-in-chief of the South Ossetian armed forces, as required by the general mobilization announced in South Ossetia.

A TASS correspondent has learned that for the first time self-defense units have taken up defensive positions on the northern and southern outskirts of the town. An invisible frontline begins there. The flow of refugees into North Ossetia is increasing. There are now over 100,000 refugees in Vladikavkaz and its suburbs. The question of where to put them and how to resettle and feed them is now an extremely serious problem for the republic.

According to the press center of the South Ossetian information committee, fire was opened last night on public buildings and key urban utilities on the suburbs of Tskhinvali and in Znauri district. Znauri, the rayon center, was subjected to especially intense rocket fire. There is no exact information on casualties, but it is learned that several children and women were wounded. [passage omitted]

Georgian militants continue to gather on the approaches to Tskhinvali. More than 20,000 are already camped in nearby villages. The Georgian side has concentrated tanks, armored carriers, "Alazan" anti-hail guns, artillery, and mobile large-caliber machine-guns. The town is waiting for an attack.

The peoples of North and South Ossetia have received positively the message addressed by Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Republic, to Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, saying that the inhabitants of the region pin their hopes on the Russian president and parliament in regard to their resolution on upholding human dignity and the rights of national minorities. They are confident that everything necessary will be done to implement the decision of the Fifth Congress of Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic People's Deputies on South Ossetia.

Pilots Seek End To 'Bloodshed'

LD0712235491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 7 Dec 91

["TV Inform" report by I. Tabalova]

[Text] The situation in the military subunits stationed on the territory of South Ossetia is no easier today than that of the residents of Tskhinvali who are under siege. Never before have the pilots of the helicopter regiment, which has been stationed here for over 15 years, had to perfect their flying skills under conditions in which armed attacks on officers and the shelling of helicopters and the military camp where their families live are possible. They also have to deal with humiliating searches, when soldiers and warrant officers can be seized and beaten by Georgian armed formations. Besides, the pilots have been warned that the military helicopters will be shot down by thermal rockets [teplovyye rakety] if they do not accept the conditions imposed by the Georgian side. These and other facts were reported at a meeting of officers of the regiment. The decisions of the meeting have just been sent to the military command and the press. Rejecting any attempts to drag them into the interethnic conflict, the military pilots demand that urgent measures be taken for the stabilization of the situation in the region, so that even greater bloodshed is avoided.

[Begin recording] [S.U. Beppayev, deputy commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, identified by caption] Naturally, the Army will not be involved. However, if such pressure continues and there are such constant attacks and constant casualties among innocent military personnel, then, naturally the army, in those units where this is going on, will be compelled to take measures for protecting its honor and its dignity. [end recording]

Gamsakhurdia Views Events, Criticizes Center

AU0612165691 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 29 November 91 p 1

[By Georgiy Mshvidobadze]

[Text] Yesterday, a meeting between Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and representatives of the intelligentsia took place in the conference hall of the Cabinet of Ministers.

In his address, the president drew their attention to the republic's external and domestic problems. It was pointed out that the authorities are particularly worried by the presence of illegal armed formations on the territory of Georgia. These formations destabilize the situation in the republic, further aggravate the conditions that breed crime, and, in the final analysis, play into the hands of our adversaries. It is obvious that the military actions on the part of Ossetian militants and units of Union internal troops have intensified as a result of political disunion.

The president qualified as unacceptable the proposal by T. Kitovani, the former commander of the National Guard, that his armed formation be given the status of "special regiment" subordinated to the Georgian Supreme Council. The pointlessness of adopting such a decision is due to the fact that, if military actions start, there will be no time to summon the Supreme Council to determine the functions and tasks of the relevant subunit.

At the same time, in view of the intensifying military confrontation and the growing number of bandit attacks against Georgian villages in Samachablo [South Ossetia], the question of the need to accelerate the process of the formation of a national army was raised at the meeting.

With regard to the center's new imperial policy, Z. Gamsakhurdia pointed to its numerous manifestations that are destabilizing the situation. In addition to the blockade imposed on the supply of energy and foodstuffs, the so-called center fails to provide republics with sufficient amounts of paper money. As the president said, the republic can only emerge from this situation by accelerating the process of introducing its own paper money.

The activity of numerous services that disseminate false information among the populations of former republics and of foreign countries may also be considered a manifestation of imperial policy. In this connection, the mendacious statements in the press and on the television by G. Starovoytova, the adviser to the Russian president on national issues, were pointed to in particular. Such speeches incite interethnic strife. Nor is it accidental, said the president, that all these slanderous statements against the Government of Georgia and its president bear a single stamp, whether they be voiced by G. Starovoytova, Ye. Bonner, or our compatriot G. Khoshtariya, who recently accused the president of Georgia of destroying South Ossetia and of the terrible genocide with regard to the Ossetian population.

There is no doubt that all these fabrications are an attempt to overthrow the legitimately elected Georgian Government.

The president's speech expressed particular apprehension in connection with the fact that opposition forces guided from Moscow manage to involve some politically ignorant students in their dirty adventure.

This is attested to by the recent students demonstration that was, undoubtedly, provoked by opposition parties. Some students put forward slogans of a struggle against any ideology, governmental or opposition alike, being imposed upon them. In this connection, the president offered explanations stating that the government is not imposing any special ideology upon anyone. Georgia's only ideology lies in our traditional ideals: Our faith, language, and national unity.

Asked which countries are ready to recognize our sovereignty, and on what conditions, the president answered that he preferred not to answer the first part of the question, because our influential "well-wishers" in Moscow make every effort to somehow undermine Georgia's reputation in those countries that are going to recognize our independence. In particular, this is precisely what has happened with the State of Israel, with whom relations have significantly deteriorated as a result of the provocative activity of Kremlin agents supervised by its emissaries.

As concerns the conditions of recognition, the recognition of our sovereignty by the Union is, for some reason, such a condition for many Western countries. As a preliminary condition, the Union demands that we sign the Union treaty. However, the Union treaty means centralization of the economy and of the financial system, as well as unity of the armed forces, and so on. This means new bondage imposed by a renewed empire.

Also discussed at the meeting was the question of the republican leadership's attitude toward the idea of a confederation of Caucasian peoples. According to the president, this idea comes from the Kremlin, and R. Nishanov, chairman of the Nationalities Committee, is its author. It has nothing to do with the genuine unity of Caucasian peoples and serves the empire's pseudointernational goals and interests.

In connection with the question of Georgia's mediatory role in the efforts to settle the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Z. Gamsakhurdia recalled Georgia's peace initiative and expressed the hope that the negotiations would be concluded successfully if the center does not intervene, even though M. Gorbachev again took countermeasures by inviting the leaders of the two republics to a meeting of the State Council.

Other issues of the republic's political, social, and economic life were also discussed at the meeting. In particular, these were questions of reform in the educational system and privatization of housing.

'Illegal' Armed Units Ordered To Surrender Arms

AU1012094791 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 p 2

["Republic of Georgia Supreme Council Resolution on Illegal Armed Groupings on the Territory of the Republic of Georgia" issued in Tbilisi on 3 December]

[Text] In accordance with the Republic of Georgia law adopted on 20 December 1990, internal troops—the National Guard—were formed at the Republic of Georgia Ministry of Internal Affairs. Their goal was to protect the interests of the motherland, its territorial integrity, the life and personal dignity of its citizens, and their constitutional rights and freedoms from criminal encroachments and other antisocial actions.

On 9 September 1991, the National Guard of the Republic of Georgia was made subordinate to the president of the Republic of Georgia.

As the subsequent development of events showed, T. Kitovani, former commander of the National Guard, illegally gathered units of the Guard on the territory of Shavnabada [a suburb of Tbilisi] in order to involve them in an antistate putsch.

Despite the order issued by the president of the Republic of Georgia on 9 September 1991 for the soldiers and officers to leave the territory of Shavnabada and return to their city barracks, the armed units of the Guard that took up positions, without authorization, first, in the center of the capital and then around the Tbilisi Sea [an artificial lake], actively participated in antistate actions.

The president of the Republic of Georgia, by his decree of 30 September 1991, and the Commission for the Protection of Human Rights at the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia—by its appeal issued on 13 November 1991—proposed that the illegal armed groupings surrender their weapons and thus avoid criminal responsibility. However, they have not accepted this humane proposal and have continued their armed actions against the state.

Proceeding from the above, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia resolves as follows:

1. The units of the National Guard stationed around the Tbilisi Sea must obey the president of the Republic of Georgia.

2. Those units of the National Guard that do not obey the president of the Republic of Georgia must be declared illegal armed groupings.

3. To propose to the participants in the illegal armed formations to voluntarily surrender their weapons, ammunition, and equipment to the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Georgia and to leave the place they have occupied not later than 10 December.

4. Those members of the illegal armed groupings who have fulfilled the demands of item 3 of the present resolution will not be legally prosecuted.

5. If the demands specified in item 3 of the given resolution are not fulfilled, measures provided for by the current legislation will be taken against the participants in the illegal armed groupings.

Nemo Burchuladze, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council.

3 December 1991, Tbilisi.

Supreme Council Repeals Abkhazian Resolution

AU1012095691 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 6 December 91 p 2

["Republic of Georgia Supreme Council Resolution on the Resolution Adopted by the Supreme Council of the Abkhazian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic on 26 November 1991" issued in Tbilisi on 3 December]

[Text] On 26 November 1991, the Supreme Council of the Abkhazian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic [ASSR] adopted the resolution "On the State of the Mobilization of Reserves and on the Call for Active Military Service in Abkhazia."

The resolution deals with norms of accumulation [nakopleniye] and strengthening of the mobilization resources in the USSR and with the procedure for calling for active military service in the Soviet Army combat troops and subunits stationed on the territory of Abkhazia. This implies the creation in the Abkhazian Autonomous Republic of military formations of a foreign state and leads to a destabilization of the sociopolitical situation and to confrontation there.

This act of the Abkhazian ASSR Supreme Soviet is clearly at variance with the Constitution of the Republic of Georgia; with the Republic of Georgia Presidential Decree of 9 September 1991 "On the Creation of the Republic of Georgia Ministry of Defense" whereby the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Georgia was authorized to form the National Army of the Republic of Georgia; with the Republic of Georgia Supreme Council Resolution of 28 December 1990 "On Banning Those Armed Formations That Have Not Been Provided for by the Law"; with the Act of the Restoration of Georgian State Independence; with the Republic of Georgia law "On Alternative Service"; and with the Constitution of the Abkhazian ASSR, which does not provide for military service in Abkhazia and does not authorize the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Abkhazian ASSR to resolve such questions.

Based upon item 24 of Article 104 of the Constitution of the Republic of Georgia, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia resolves as follows:

To consider the Resolution adopted on 26 November 1991 by the Abkhazian ASSR Supreme Council "On the State of the Mobilization Reserve and the Call for Active Military Service in Abkhazia" as invalid and having no legal force on the account that it is at variance with the Constitutions of the Republic of Georgia and of the Abkhazian ASSR.

Nemo Burchuladze, deputy chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Georgia.

3 December 1991, Tbilisi.

Kazakhstan

Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic Renamed

LD1012112291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1044 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By KAZTAG-TASS correspondent Tatyana Zhurbenko]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 10 Dec (TASS)—The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic has ceased to exist. It has been renamed the Kazakh Republic by a decision of a Supreme Soviet session that opened here today. A written appeal of President Nazarbayev to parliamentarians prompted the debate on this issue, which was not included on the agenda.

Nazerbayev Surprised by 'Treaty of Three'

OW0912183791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] After his talks with Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin in Moscow Monday [9 December], President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan told journalists that nuclear systems deployed in Russia, the Ukraine and Kazakhstan should be controlled from a single center. He said "it is about time we settled this problem and stopped threatening the world."

Describing the main tasks facing the sovereign republics, Mr. Nazarbayev urged the republican leaders to pool their efforts in the economic sphere, and then proceed to decide the future political system of the Union.

Commenting on the media reports that a Slav alliance had been formed by three ex-Soviet republics, the Kazakh president said it was too early to speak of such an alliance. According to him, the leaders of sovereign states, including President Gorbachev, were now expected, without delay, to recognize the ex-Soviet republics' independence and help one another to join the United Nations.

In reply to a question from IF [INTERFAX], Mr. Nazarbayev said the conclusion near Brest of a "treaty of three" had come as a surprise to him. He observed that decisions as important as the denunciation of the Union Treaty of 1922 required, as a minimum, a preliminary conference of all the republics concerned.

Mr. Nazarbayev censured the idea of moving the central administration out of Moscow (under the Brest agreement it is to be based in Minsk—IF) and protested against a freeze on the activity of union structures.

Asked what the USSR president's future might be like, the Kazakh leader said, "Gorbachev has not yet exhausted his potential and is needed by the nation at this crucial momnent."

When IF's correspondent asked what the Kazakh president thought of the latest reshuffle in the top military echelons (Saturday [7 December] saw the replacement of the chief of the USSR General Staff and the commandant of the Kremlin—IF), Mr. Nazarbayev said he could not understand why Mr. Gorbachev had replaced the General Staff chief without consulting the State Council. On the replacement of the Kremlin commandant with the commandant of Gorbachev's residence, Nazarbayev said he had learned it only from the IF correspondent.

Further on Minsk Decision

LD0912181391 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1631 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Video report by A. Galkin on news conference by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev at the Kazakhstan permanent mission in Moscow on 9 December]

[Text] Replying to questions by Soviet and foreign correspondents, Nursultan Nazarbayev said that he considers any state formations on an ethnic basis to be vestiges of the Middle Ages. Kazakhstan is in favor of preserving close economic relations with all republics. We must carry through the reform in civilized ways and not stand apart as was done in Minsk by the Belorussian, Russian, and Ukrainian leaders, he said. We can only pull through a difficult time together. We need a coordinating body headed by Mikhail Gorbachev. His possibilities are far from having been exhausted. On the whole, Nursultan Nazarbiyev continued, the decision to dissolve the old union and create new alliances is the prerogative of the Congress of People's Deputies.

[Begin recording] [Nazarbayev] Of course, this needed to be tackled in agreement with others.

[Galkin] Do you not regret having flown here to Moscow?

[Nazarbayev] I regret that the meeting of the four, which was scheduled and to which all heads of states had assented, did not take place. I regret, I regret that. After all, events are developing so rapidly now in our country. Probably it is necessary to be realistic and it is necessary to attempt to find civilized ways out of any situation that arises, on the whole, as this is being done throughout the entire civilized world. That is what I am in favor of.

[Galkin] Thank you very much. [end recording]

Supreme Soviet To Review Gorbachev Statement

OW1012130491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1150 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic has been renamed the Republic of Kazakhstan. A resolution to that effect was adopted by the Supreme Soviet session that had opened in Alma-Ata on Monday [9 December].

The session will hold special parliamentary hearings about Mikhail Gorbachev's recent statement on national TV on the transfer of five Russian regions to Kazakhstan during the development of virgin lands in the 1950s.

Most Kazakh MPs [members of parliament] accepted the statement as "a falsification of history." The parliament instructed a group of historians to prepare a consulting report on the matter. The parliamentary session will consider the territorial question separately.

The agenda includes a package of economic bills (on taxes, on shares and other securities, on bankruptcy, concessions, etc.) and bills on social and government development.

Communists Reject Decision To Disband Party

OW0912145091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1130 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At the 19th congress of Kazakh communists in Alma-Ata the decision taken at the last republican meeting on disbanding the Communist Party was repealed. In the appeal which was passed on Saturday [7 December] "To communists, the people of Kazakhstan" it is emphasized that the September 18th congress was conducted in a vulgar breach of party rules. Partially acknowledging their guilt for the present difficulties in society, the Kazakh communists still repudiate any participation in the August anti-constitutional coup.

The communist congress also passed a resolution "On Violations of A Person's Rights and the Principles of Democracy in the Baltic Republics." Delegates demanded the immediate release of "political prisoner number 1," the first secretary of the former Communist Party of Latvia Alfred Rubiks and soldiers of the Rigan OMON (black beret special forces) [Special Purpose Militia Detachment], and also to end investigations of communists and members of the Komsomol, the communist youth organization.

Academy Scientists Devise New Solid Fuel

LD0912105291 Moscow TASS in English 0848 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By KAZTAG-TASS correspondent Konstantin Borodinov]

[Text] Alma-Ata December 9 TASS—A solid fuel with unique properties has been devised by researchers at the Chemistry and Metallurgy Institute of the Kazakhstan Academy of Sciences.

Professor Raushan Sarmurzina at the laboratory of energy- accumulating substances has shown the correspondent a powder and metal bars which serve as a fuel for experimental tractors that operate practically without harmful discharges into the atmosphere.

These vehicles were successfully tested in hothouses near St. Petersburg. Outwardly, these vehicles are ordinary tractors but they have a second engine—a generator of hydrogen.

Aluminium-based alloys, activated by the additives of some metals, are prime into the engine. They enter into reaction with distilled water and release pure hydrogen. As soon as small additions of gas gets into the main engine its power sharply increases without noxious exhaust fumes even at the highest RPM.

Thorough measurements have shown that fuel burns practically to the full. The exhausts contain no organic vestiges such as benzopyrene with which the atmosphere has been poisoned for over a century.

Kyrgyzstan

Expert Warns High Taxes May Hamper Business

OW1012045591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2016 GMT 9 Dec 91

[From the "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A new tax law under consideration in Kyrgyzstan envisages a high tax rate which might hamper the development of entrepreneurship in the republic, warns an expert in Kyrgyzstan's presidential apparatus, Mr. Rafkat Khasanov.

For enterprises engaged in production, the draft legislation sets a tax rate of 48%. For trading and intermediary cooperatives, the tax rate is higher, 60%. All barter deals will be taxed at the rate of 55%. Mr. Khasanov thinks that the optimal tax rate would be much lower, about 25-30%.

Mr. Khasanov added that it would also be necessary to offer privileges to foreign investors, so that their profit taxes would not exceed 30%.

Business School Opened at State University

LD1012101691 Moscow TASS in English 0849 GMT 10 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valentina Andreyeva]

[Text] Bishkek December 10 TASS—A business school has opened at the State University of Kyrgyzstan, a republic in the Asian part of the Soviet Union.

The school has been founded under an agreement between the Soviet State Committee for Public Education and the IBM company on the strength of a memorandum of understanding in the fields of culture, science and education between the United States and the Soviet Union, signed in Washington in June last year during the summit meeting between Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev.

By way of humanitarian aid the company has handed over a roomful of personal computers of the latest modification to the business centre. Classes at the business school will have two purposes: a long-term study of management and the retraining of business people for work under market economy conditions.

Not only students but also industrial and office workers intend to attend the business school.

Tajikistan

Islamic Party Opposes Republic's Leadership

OW1012042791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Islamic Rebirth Party [IRP] in Tajikistan is, according to its leader Mukhammadsharif Khimmatov, in passive opposition to the Communist leadership of the republic.

Mr. Khimmatov told a news conference dedicated to the party's official registration in Dushanbe Monday [9 December] that Rakhman Nabiyev's pro- Communist regime should be expected to die of its own accord within the next year or two.

He said the IRP would seek to come to political power in full compliance with the Constitution. Once it seized power it would have to decide whether to build an Islamic republic or a secular Muslim republic in Tajikistan.

The IRP is in favor of an economic alliance but against a political union among the sovereign republics, viewing the latter as an attempt "to revitalize central diktat over the republics." Mr. Khimmatov called against Pan-Turkism, but noted that Muslims in Central Asia, as well as in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran "can in principle form a union."

Opposes Union Treaty

LD1012054491 Moscow TASS in English 2023 GMT 9 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Galina Gridnyeva]

[Text] Dushanbe December 9 TASS—The Islamic Revival Party, a biggest one in Tajikistan, told a news conference here today it will be in political opposition to the current republican leadership.

The party lost at the recent elections of republican president, in which it participated in a block with the Democratic Party and the Rastokhez popular movement.

The Islamic Party stressed it is against Tajikistan's signing of the Union Treaty. "We are for the establishment of only economic relations," Deputy party Chairman Usmon Dovlat told the news conference. He did not say whether or not the party will support efforts of some Central Asian leaders to create the so-called "Asian Union" to counterbalance the commonwealth of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia.

Speaking on their program, leaders of the Islamic Revival Party stressed once again they, orienting on Islamic values, call for the creation of a secular democratic state.

Turkmenia

Cooperation Agreement Signed With Turkey

OW1012043591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1945 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Turkmenistan's President Saparmurad Niyazov, according to his press office, signed an economic cooperation agreement with Turkey during his recent visit to that country.

Turkey commits itself to helping Turkmenistan modernize its telecommunications and check the condition of the republic's rail- and motor-roads. The two sides have agreed to establish air and sea links.

Turkmenistan plans to export gas and oil products to Turkey via Iran. Turkey will help Turkmenistan promote its oil and gas industries. The two sides also agreed in principle to exchange permanent trade missions.

Uzbekistan

Karimov Receives South Korean Ambassador

SK1012095891 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1330 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Uzbekistan President Karimov received Kong No-myong, ROK ambassador to the Soviet Union.

It was emphasized at the meeting that the Uzbekistan's declaration of independence opened broad possibilities for the republic to develop trade and economic relations with other countries, but first with Asian countries.

Establishing a consulates general in each capital city was also discussed. We are reminded that about 200,000 Koreans are now residing in Uzbekistan.

Capital of Karakalpakstan To Be Moved

PM0912143791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 5 Dec 91 p 2

[Correspondent A. Kaipbergenov report under the "Fact and Commentary" rubric: "Capital Moves"]

[Text] Tashkent—Uzbek presidential candidate I. Karimov has laid the foundation stone for the new capital of the Soviet Republic of Karakalpakstan.

He began his election tour by visiting an environmental disaster area. In specialists' opinion, it is easier to rebuild the current center, Nukus, situated in a depression next to the dried-up bed of the once mighty Amu Darya, heated by subterranean salt waters, than to drain it.

A symbolic sign bearing the inscription "First stone on the site of the future new capital of Karakalpakstan, laid by Islam Karimov, first president of Uzbekistan" has been placed on a hill 50 km south of Nukus. Of course, moving a whole city with a population of almost 200,000 is not something that can be done overnight, it is a complex business. But people tired of sympathy see the decision as the long-awaited start of a great concrete task.